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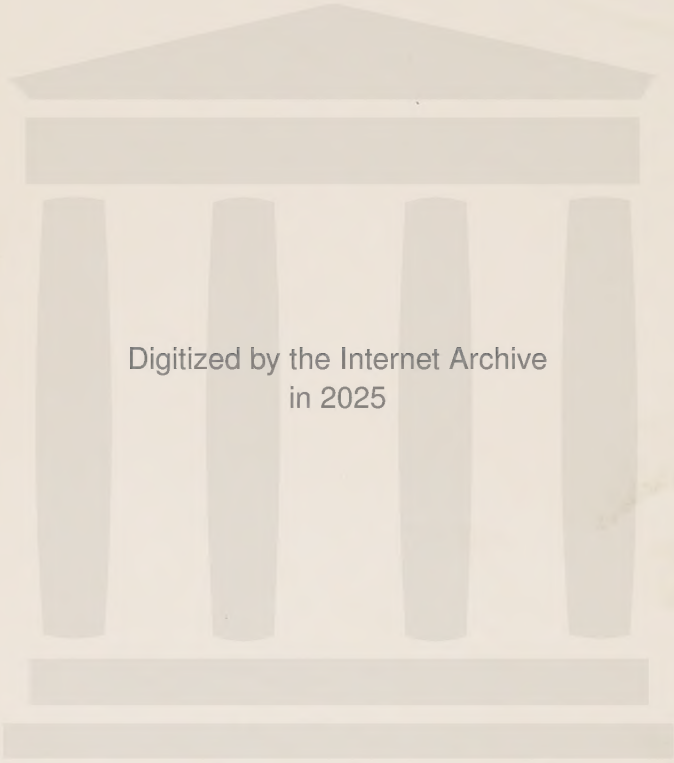

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THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

EBENEZER ELLIOTT,

THE CORN-LAW RHYMER.

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ST. MARY'S COLLEGE OF MARYLAND
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THE POETICAL WORKS

OF

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

JUVENILE POEMS.

THE VERNAL WALK.*

To Miss Sarah Austin, "A Man in Counsel," I address these Poems of my youth; because my mature years have produced nothing which ought to inspire me with any other feelings than those of humility and shame, in the presence of her Genius.

PREFACE.

I have discovered, among some old papers, the first sketch of my first publication, "the Vernal Walk," written in my seventeenth year, and, like all my early writings, except the very earliest, in my favourite measure, blank verse. It contains some poetry, stolen from Ossian and Thomson, and some theology, furnished by my learned friend, young Joseph Ramsbottom; but, even as the work of a boy, it is bad, though better than the published poem, improved as it was, by my art of joinery, into a rather shewy piece of patch-work, bombast, and commonplace.

The tale is my first sustained effort in rhyme, and it shews, by the construction of the sentences, that its author had been accustomed to write blank verse only. It was first published many years ago, after having been improved, like "The Vernal Walk." It is now printed as originally written. All my local and domestic critics made it a butt for ridicule, before its publication; and it was frightfully castigated, on its first appearance in print, by one of the dispensers of public praise and blame. Why then reprint it? Because it is endeared to me by the persecution it has suffered. The idiot of the family is sometimes a favourite; and Byron doggedly wrote dramas because he was told that he could not write them.

THE VERNAL WALK.

Arising cheerful from the bed of rest,
Thee, first beheld, thee I salute, O sun!
And call thee image of the One Supreme,
Who bade thy planets roll th' eternal course,
And gave them to thy sceptre, God of Fire!
Or shall I call thee—if I name thee may—
Fountain of Beauty! whence all living streams
Flow, listening to their own sweet music? Hail,
Soul of the System! shouldst thou cease to shine,
All life would die. When first thy beams awaked,
When first thou pour'dst the ocean of thy light,
Harmony sang in every ravish'd grove,
And young variety bade the wild winds
Scatter to th' ends of earth her rainbow hues.
Then, Lord of Nature! mov'd around thy throne
The seasons. Spring came earliest, songful Spring,
Whose looks are melody. Rich Summer next
Grasp'd in his hand thy garment's woven fire;
Then fruit-fed Autumn came, and wept to see
The many wrinkles on his withering hand;
Last, Winter cast a dark scowl on his clouds,
And curs'd thy splendour: through his hoary hair
Loudly, and through his venerable beard,
Hurried the angry blast, and blast-blown sleet.
But now Spring cometh, and the cuckoo's voice,
That ever follows, where she treads on flowers.
Hark! 'tis the hymn of nature! Love-taught birds
Salute, with songs of gratulation sweet,
The sweet May morning. How harmoniously,
Over these meadows of the rising sun,
The music floats! O Love! Love ever young!
On the soft bosom of the Spring reclined,
Nurse of the tender thought and generous deed!
Thou com'st to bless thy children. Let me drink
Thy waters of elysium, and bless thee.
Oft have I pass'd yon cottage door at eve,
Where sat the swain, his daily labour done,
Nursing his little children on his knee,
And kissing them at times, while o'er him bent
His happy partner, smiling as she view'd
Her lisping babes; then have I blessed thee, Love,
And fondly call'd thee Fount of Social Peace!
What art thou, deathless, all-pervading power,
That, like a meek, yet universal sun,
Through universal nature gently shin'st?
Art thou a ray from light's unclouded source?
An emanation of divinity?
No; thou art God, our God, th' Eternal One!
To thee I bow, Being all amiable,
On thee I call. Parent of every good,
Preserve me from the vices of the base,
And when I reach the dark and narrow house,
Let me have well deserved the good man's love!

Oh, what a miracle is Nature! Say,
Is it not strange that on this sterile rock
Such giant trees should grow, and fix so fast
That Winter's strongest tempests move them not?
See how the twisting roots pursue each chink,
Enter each cleft, and tie their strong cords there!
How softly falls the shower! The beauteous bow
Bends in the west, where gladly weep the flowers.

* Originally printed at Cambridge, by the father of the liberal newspaper press, Benjamin Flower—a man great in his goodness.

Delightful season! how unlike art thou
To Winter, when he strides from storm to storm,
And through the deep-toned gloom, night's only star
With the winds raceth, as the heav'ns descend
Black! All is black, except that single star.
Far from his wife and children, on the steep
Where rock o'er rock projects, and, o'er the sea,
Hangs crown'd with moaning pine, the traveller
Stands toil-worn, pale, confounded. Nought he hears
But howlings of the savage blast, and shrieks
That sound athwart the waters. Nought he sees
But the stern outline of the shapeless hills,
Which, when the lightning swallows up the gloom,
Stretch their mute vastness over half the sky.
Knew'st thou Matilda? Here the maiden dwelt,
And here the living lily droop'd and died,
Meekly and mutely as a voiceless shower:
So on the leaves of palmy sycamore
A dewdrop shines, and trembles, till it falls,
And all the fair transparency is lost.
Ay, but the breeze, that through the churchyard grass
For ever rustles, still shall speak of her!
And her old father still weeps for his child,
Like an old thorn, o'er the snow-cover'd bank
Where bloom'd his violet in happier days.
O Death and Sorrow! like the moon ye gild
The flowerless waste of life, then wing our thoughts
To regions of infinity of bliss.

The shower is past, the birds renew their songs,
And sweetly through its tears the landscape smiles:
So o'er departed worth remembrance weeps.

Here on the right, in beauteous wildness, tower
Root-girded rocks; and here the torrent foams,
Then murmurs sweetly, where it softly flows.
See, see! what rarest flowers here hide themselves!
Children of nature! let me dwell with you,
And talk with you a pensive botanist.
Oh, blest is he who dwells in scenes like this
Beside the winding streamlet, where the hills
Ascend in glory, with their ancient oaks.
Blest is the poet of the lonely wild—
The lonely bard of nature. He to streams
Harmonious, he to sympathetic woods
Warbles his rustic song, nor feareth man,
But God alone, as, stealing through the fields
Thoughtful, he raises to the Infinite
The voice of pure devotion. Hear my prayer,
Eternal King of universal worlds!
Far from the crowded city let me dwell,
Bosom'd amid the woods. Though selfish man
Pollute the earth, and rustic faith is gone;
Yet some green desert haply may escape
The wide-spread desolation; still, perhaps,
Some silent valley, with its sleepy rill,
May in the bosom of surrounding rocks
Smile arm'd horrors, like an ever-green
Half-hid in snow, on Winter's joyless waste.
Giver of Perfect Gifts! there let me dwell.

Who would not wander here? who would not here
Grow old in song? The poet, soul-refresh'd,
With glowing cheek, and eye uplift to heaven,
Might look through nature here to nature's God.
Farewell, cold World, farewell! I flee to thee,
O Nature! Hail, thou solitary vale!
And hither come, Imagination! Come,
And waft my soul to isles of poesy!
Come, come, oh, come! come with thine eyes of light
That shine away the darkness of the soul!
Come, with thy heaving bosom, and thy hair
That streams like sunshine on the hollow wind!
And I will strike my lyre of rustic song,
And sing of all things that are frail and fair.
Here springs the odorous primrose; sweetly here
The orchard blooms; here bees are full of Spring.
The poet courts the violet as he strays;
But Winter cometh, and the flower is gone;
And then, saith he, "'Tis faded." Thus, O Man!
Thou liv'st and diest. Strong is thy youthful frame;
But soon the feeble steps of Age approach,
Follow'd by Death. Even on thy new-made grave
Oblivion sits. The friends who knew thee once,
Know thee no more—no more. They yet survive
To send abroad the wildly wandering soul
In joyous thoughts. But thou sleep'st gloomily
The dreamless sleep; and ere the second spring,
Oh, mortal flower! shall call thee from thy grave
To bloom in fairer fields, years, years of years—
Ages, ages of ages, with their deeds,
Shall pass away. Then from His throne of light,
Raised on the darkness of eternal storms,
God shall arise, and to heaven's silence say,
"All is accomplished." Christ shall then descend,
Borne on his chariot of the elements,
That what its motion shakes the universe,
And rolls self-moved through spaces measureless,
Thought-swift, on wheels of thunder. Christ shall speak:
"Corruption, put on Immortality."
And Death shall hear him, and restore his dead.

Behold yon mountain! hoary son of Time,
Elder than poesy! above the vale
He frowneth, vast and horrid. In his clefts
The humble flowret blooms, and stunted trees
Twist on his crags. Around his gloomy sides,
Against his rugged head, the dash'd clouds break,
For oft day crowns him with a gloom like night.
What though th' ascent is steep and rude the way?
Let us ascend the summit—and look down!
Around! above! to Him whose home is thought.

Behold a picture, by th' Eternal drawn!
Look t'wards the north, how lovely and how gay!
Look t'wards the south, how awful, how sublime!
Look all around! behold one boundless scene
Of beauty, wildness, and sublimity,
Bright in the beams of the descending sun.
Farewell, effulgent, world-reviving orb!
Still imitate thy Maker, still pursue
Thy course sublime, and bless revolving worlds,
Thou noblest likeness of the Deity!
Oh, thou that sway'st the boundless universe!
King of illimitable empire! hear
My trembling voice of praise. I know thou art;
But when my soul would raise her eyes to thee,
Vainly I try to grasp so fast a view;
For in thy half-revealed sublimity,
Holding the reins of universal rule,
Thou sitt'st invisible upon the throne
Of universal nature, and behold'st
A vast immensity, fill'd by thyself.
Spirit of spirits! ere the eagle flew,
Ere the worm crawl'd, ere sang the love-taught wren,
Or man, erect, before thee stood and smil'd,
Thou had'st existed an eternity
Of thoughtful ages: ere there lived one soul
To worship thee, oh, God of Holiness!
Wrapt in incomprehensibility,
Pleas'd with self-contemplation, thou didst muse
In silence on thine own eternal thoughts.
Through all extent thou piercest; nothing is
Where thou art not; even in me thou dwell'st.
Thou mov'st the strings of mental melody

Which tune my soul to harmony and love.
Thou bid'st my fancy soar to realms of light,
Bid'st reason—holy reason—muse on thee
And in thy works behold thee, thron'd o'er heights
And depths of glory inaccessible.
I, in the majesty of nature, see
The greatness of eternal majesty;
I, in her smiling scenery, behold
The bounteous smile of beauty infinite.
Thy goodness is unbounded, God of Love!
Here—or wherever Uncreated Light
Flames in the sea of ever-vital beams
World-peopled, as this vernal air with birds—
Father and God! thy sons shall worship thee!

SECOND NUPTIALS.

Two hours ago,
The croaking crow
Return'd into the wood.
Thick night, above the melting snow,
Conceals the pouring cloud;
And Don, bank-full, talks big and loud,
And swaggers with his flood.
No azure islands heav'n; no star
O'er Thryberg's grey oaks peeps afar.
Piercing the deluge of the sky,
Through which the blast wades drearily.
But on the hill-side there is light;
And where its boughs the bare elm flings,
Deserted Mary's cottage rings
With dance, and song, and merriment.
Is this the widow's wedding night?
'Tis now ten years since William went
To fight the Yankees in despite,
Rather than stay at home and fight;
And past are six long months or more
Since Matthew Hall arrived, and told
That William's limbs lie stiff and cold
On Champlain's forest shore.
And does the widow wed again?
Oh, widowhood is weary pain—
The worst that can befall!
And loving him, as he loves her,
Say, does she wed the messenger
Of good news, Matthew Hall?
Yes, joy laughs on the green hill's side;
And Mary is again a bride.

As wave on Canklow's forehead fair
Th' autumnal mapple's locks of gold,
In many a curl, her sunny hair
Above her flowing tears was roll'd.
Sad! and a bride? A mourning bride
She sate her new-espous'd beside,
And scarcely seem'd to heed or hear
The sounds that cheer'd all hearts around.
But—when the music ceased to sound—
Said Matthew, then, unto his dear—
Soft-touching, with his finger's end,
Her who, ere while, was Mary Bray—
"How strange that my expected friend
Came not to give the bride away!
What stays his coming, can'st thou say?"

"The flood," she answered, "is abroad,
And peril haunts the buried road.
The ferryman hath left his boat,
Which hath not, this day, earn'd a groat,
And now, in Mexbrow, with his wench,
He fuddles o'er the alehouse bench."

"Yet," then said he, with looks of fear,
"I would, I would, my friend were here!
For much, indeed—now mark thou me!—
Imports his coming, love, to thee:
He is a man of mystery!
And come he will, or soon, or late,
To question thee with words of fate.
Tell him no lies, my loving mate!
For on thy answer's truth depend
The weal of husband, wife, and friend."

"Thou shalt be well obey'd," replied,
While faster stream'd her tears, the bride.

Then thus, once more, spake Matthew Hall:—
"A wedding? or a funeral?
Weeping! and on thy wedding day?
Weeping! and still for William Bray?
Of this no more, no more, I pray!—
Ho! where is now the village Muse?
Is she to scare the pigs afraid?
A song! a song! nor man, nor maid,
Who hopes to wed, to sing refuse.
But pensive Henry shall sing first,
The cross'd in love, the sorrow-nurs'd.
Harry, thou ne'er did'st rightly pray
Till sulky Sarah jilted thee.
Religion, ancient sages say,
Religion, from the realms above,
Came down to soothe the mourner, love;
And passion then was piety.
Indulge me, Henry, in my whim—
(Solemn th' occasion!) sing a hymn;
A hymn, a psalm, a—anything;
E'en call it what thou wilt—but sing!"

Pensive and pale, arose the youth—
The child of feeling and of truth—
And modestly, and yet with pride,
His ancient fiddle laid aside,
Which not its weight in gold could buy.
True it was clumsy to the eye;
True its dark side some flaws display'd;
Yet was there more than music in't,
For why? 'twas by his grandsire made,
The genius, fam'd so far and wide,
Th' inventor of the butter-print!
The worm of death was in his breast.
Sarah, the faithless, met his eye,
Which grief and mute reproach express'd;
Then gazing, self-condemn'd, on earth,
She heav'd, or seem'd to heave, a sigh;
But Jacob came! and, in its birth,
The infant, frail repentance, died.
At first the Minstrel's voice was low
As whisper'd prayers of fear or wo;
But soon distinct, and deep, and clear,
The soul-felt accents met the ear,
Full of that fervour of the heart
Which bids all earthly toys depart—
Taught, by calamity, to scorn
All that of human pride is born.

THE REJECTED'S SONG.

Scarcely from Mary's cheek, where bliss
In tears and blushes lay,
Had William kissed, with transport's kiss,
Love's blissful tear away,
When, o'er her murder'd sister's bier,
He saw her shed a wilder tear.

Fast, fast, into the new-made grave,
Fast fell the blinding snow;

But Winter had not ceas'd to rave
O'er her who slept below,
When Mary mourn'd her William fled!
And then she mourn'd her William dead!

Ah! life is but a tearful stream
On which floats joy, the flower;
Deeply we plunge, and rise, and scream,
And strive, with all our power,
To grasp the bright weeds gliding nigh,
And snatch, and miss, and sink, and die.

The young bride wept; the sister wept,
Where Ann serenely sleeps;
The widow wept, when William slept;
The wedded widow weeps!
Ah! earth's frail love is wo, is wo!
Mary! thy sister, found it so!

And, not to soothe wild passion, came
Religion from above:
Speak not in scorn her holy name;
Religion's self is love—
Love, with no poison in her kiss;
And, if she weeps, her tear is bliss.

Be still, my heart! soon wilt thou be
Beneath thy mother's mould;
There is a bed of rest for thee,
Where Ann reposes cold:
The turf sleeps sweetly on her breast;
And thou (but not like it) shalt rest.

Applauded by the noiseless tear,
Although no plaudit met his ear,
Thus sang the meekest child of wo
The song his heart made years ago;
But inspiration's sudden glow
Added a happy word or so.
His cheek, late pallid as the snow,
Now burn'd with feeling's hectic glow;
For Death his banner there display'd,
Beautiful as a dying maid,
Or blushing merit in distress;
Or, like the meek and splendourless
Rose—not the white one, but the pale—
That, with cheek carnation'd faintly,
Blushing sweetness chastely, saintly,
Sigheth in the vale.

"My drooping Mary!" Matthew said,
"I like this lay of Harry's well;
'Tis sad, and true. But canst thou tell
What of the murderer, John, became?
Mary, I slew the accursed man,
The wretch, who kill'd thy sister Ann.
We met—'twas in the ranks of death—
With set teeth and suspended breath
On me the conscious traitor scowl'd;
On him my startled eye was rolled;
He rush'd to slay, but stopp'd aghast—
Through him my cranching bayonet pass'd.
He shriek'd, and fell! With dreadful stare
He lay, and look'd a hopeless prayer;
I, shuddering, turn'd—I could not bear
To look upon his conscience there."

Then Matthew to his umber'd cheek,
Acquainted long with sun and wind,
Press'd drooping Mary's forehead meek,
And said, "Thou canst not be unkind:
Give us a ballad, I entreat,
Just like thy kiss, love, short and sweet."
She rose not from her Matthew's side,
But met his warm kiss and complied.

THE BRIDE'S SONG.

The frost was crisping o'er the Don;
Along his banks stray'd Ann with John:
The moon look'd through the rustling firs;
Her lover's hand was clasp'd in hers.
Oft look'd he backward, as he talk'd;
T'wards Sprotbro's hazels slow they walk'd;
And o'er the valley, lone and low,
Dark frown'd the age of Conisbro.

"To-morrow thou wilt wed me," said
The ill-starr'd maiden, half afraid;
"And when the rose and woodbine here
Shall blush through morning's dewy tear,
The unborn babe, begot in sin,
That, hapless, leaps my womb within,
Will smile on thee and on thy bride,
And I will smile on him, with pride."

But she, alas! too well he knew,
Nor rose, nor woodbine, more should view!
And as she bent his hand to kiss,
He aim'd a blow, and did not miss,
But plung'd his knife into her side,
And whelm'd her, shrieking, in the tide:
Then, as with lightning wing'd, fled he
To join the Yankees o'er the sea.

Where the torn heart is laid at rest,
No rose is withering on her breast,
No lily, in her hand of snow—
Pale emblem of her sex and wo;
But, sister Ann, thy woes are o'er;
Thy last dark wound will bleed no more;
And though thy path was strew'd with pain,
My sister, we shall meet again.

She ceas'd, but not the flowing tear,
And there were many weepers near.
What Matthew felt he would not own,
But cough'd, to keep the woman down;
Then rose, and from the room withdrew,
While Mary blush'd love's sweetest hue,
And, like a daisy bent with dew,
Look'd, in confusion, on the ground.
Fast then the brimful horn went round.
Who miss'd the bridegroom but the bride?
Deep drank the guests! she sate and sigh'd.
An hour had pass'd! he came not back:
She writhed on torture's mental rack;
Then to the window sad she drew,
And, hid behind the curtain blue,
Look'd out into the dismal night.
Gone was the universal white;
Wild heav'n with hurrying clouds was spread;
And through the darkness rush'd the light
Oft as the wan moon, overhead,
Like murder chas'd by conscience, fled;
And—as the smiles of maidens dead,
That mock the mute and stainless shroud—
Beautiful was the illumin'd cloud;
And—as a maniac bends aghast,
Smiting his clench'd hands high and fast—
Did many a huge tree in the blast
Wave, crashing loud, his branches vast,
Between her and the light.
Afar, she saw the river deep,
And Mexbro, by his side, asleep.
The vollied rain had ceas'd to pour;
But all the snow was in the stream,
Roaring beneath the fitful beam.
Then o'er her heart chill terror crept,
And Fancy, pale enthusiast, wept.

"Did Matthew, on that dangerous shore,
Seek him—the man of mystery?
But little good bodes he to me.
Ah, ne'er be that thought realized!
Wedded in vain, and vainly priz'd,
Deep lies my husband, drown'd!"
She look'd around;
And some one mov'd, or seem'd to move,
Between the house and grove.
On tiptoe stood the dame!
But o'er the moon, like envy, came
A cloud, that shrouded her in wo.
The door flew open; lo!
A stranger enter'd! "Matthew? No!"
With clench'd hands, and retracted form,
Like a tree bent beneath the storm,
Appall'd she stood,
While spake in sullen mood,
That age-bent stranger—bent, yet tall—
With spade-like beard of reddish grey:
"Where is thy husband, Matthew Hall?"
The bride, who scarce knew what to say,
Whisper'd her heart, "Now comes the end."
Then spoke: "Art thou my husband's friend?"

"I am," quoth he, with alter'd tone,
"His constant, best, and only one."

Then to the stranger Jacob brought
The punch he lov'd; and, at a draught,
The old man drain'd the vase of bliss.
"What emptiness in this world is!"
Sigh'd Jacob, as, with drowthy scowl,
He eyed the empty bowl:
"My thirsty friend! thou canst, I see,
Make, with thy old acquaintance, free.
I hope thou wilt, to bless our ears,
And melt our souls in music's tears,
Honour the wedding with a song,
Sad as thy phiz, but not so long."

The reverend man his wrath controll'd,
And answer'd calmly:—"Though I'm old,
I still have music in my soul."
And wonder soon, in Mary's face,
Hearken'd his deep and mellow base.

THE STRANGER'S SONG.

When Bill left Mary, o'er the seas
He sail'd so long, and sail'd so far,
That not a sixpence he could squeeze
Between his nose and yonder star.

But o'er the mast, that had got fast
Hook'd on the moon's depending horn,
He heard strange voices in the blast
Pronounce his name with boisterous scorn.

So westward up he look'd, and, lo!
The blue of heaven turn'd sickly pale;
And, west by north, he heard and saw
Nine comets, all tied tail to tail.

And they all laugh'd, and every one
Sang, "Bill, go home, go home, for shame,
For Matthew Hall, a tailor, 's gone
To woo and wed thy sulky dame."

Then all the comets loos'd their tails,
While William shed the briny tear,
Unhook'd his mast, let drop his sails,
And tack'd for Goole, to bless thee here.

He ceas'd. The bride, perturb'd, amaz'd,
Still on the age-bent stranger gaz'd,
And felt his accents in her soul.
But soon his gloom became a scowl,
And, "Tell, and truly tell," he cried,
"Why thy first husband left thy side,
And why a worse by far than he
Hath wedded thine apostacy?"

She trembled at the accents deep
In which some marvel seem'd to keep,
And said, "I am indeed bereft
Of him I lov'd! but why he left
His faithful Mary who shall tell?
Oh, still I love him, still too well!
Yet once, I own, I knock'd him down;
But then, beneath my very nose,
He wink'd at the sly gipsy, Rose,
Who, always hankering after fellows,
Thinks all their wives of her are jealous;
And that a burst nose, or black eye,
To make a loving husband fly
Is cause sufficient, I deny!
And thee to prove it such defy!
And would do, wert thou ten feet high!
I scarcely know why mine left me;
And oft I beg, on bended knee,
Heaven's pardon for th' unconscious crime.
Oh, slowly pass'd the heavy time!
At last, when gone were ten sad years,
A stranger found me in my tears,
And told me that, on Champlain's side,
William, my heart's own William, died!
He saw, the stranger saw, and tried
To soothe, with words, my heart's despair.
He was not, like my William, fair;
But, underneath a brow of care,
His umber'd cheek was manly brown;
And, o'er his wo-worn features thrown,
Oft passed a rapid smile and wild—
The sweetness of a dreaming child,
Mix'd with a warrior's majesty.
And he had been my William's friend,
E'en to his journey's end;
Together had they roam'd the woods,
And cross'd the dread Columbian floods;
Together had they fought and fled;
On Champlain's side together bled;
And there he saw my William die.
With throbbing heart and flowing eye,
I lov'd, I deeply lov'd to hear
The stranger talk of one so dear,
Of William's fondness, William's fate,
And late repentance—ah, too late!
He named me with his dying breath!
He blessed me in the arms of death!
This lock is all he could bequeath
To her who—oh, those tears of thine,
Old man, already pardon mine!
And welcome still the stranger came,
And oft, in dreams, I sighed his name—
He was to me even as a brother!
And still the oft told tale was sweet,
For still would he the tale repeat;
And, while our tears in concert stream'd,
I mourn'd my husband—so I dream'd—
I mourn'd him, till I lov'd another!
But could my earliest love return,
My William, whom I still will mourn,
I would for him renounce"—she sighed—
"Matthew and all the world beside."

"Renounce him, then, at once, for me!"
Exclaimed that man of mystery.
"Dost not thou know me, woman—say?
Behold thy husband, William Bray!"

And round her neck his arms he threw,
And cried—"What now? Why this ado?"
But she cuff'd, kick'd, and bawl'd—"Away!
Off, dotard, off! or thou shalt rue
My biting tooth and tearing nail."
Then glowr'd she—neither pleased nor civil—
Like one who thinks he sees the devil,
And knows him by his horns and tail.
"Thou—thou my husband, William Bray?
Why, thou art, as a badger, grey!"
Quoth he—"I am, and well I may;
I have been absent many a day."
"But," shrilly yelled she in dismay,
"Thou art as ugly as thou'rt grey!
With whiskers red as reynard's tail,
And square beard, like a windmill sail.
Why dost thou still, so goat-like, eye me?
Thou William?—Devil, I defy thee!"

She said, and cross'd herself, in fear,
And surely thought a fiend was near;
Yet, trembling, hoped, when doubts came o'er her,
It was the devil that stood before her!

Then grinn'd the sage a knowing grin;
And she, to bear suspense unable,
Rush'd, to assault him, o'er the table.
His bones all shook his hide within!
For, in a second, the she-dragon
Had scarcely left her guest a rag on.
And first the long beard left his chin;
Then fell to earth his cloak so big;
His cat-skin cap; his worsted wig;
And Mary, on the man she wanted,
Stared, like a wizard, self-enchanted!
He stoop'd no more, like toothless eighty,
Beneath his load of sorrows weighty,
But stood before her strait and young;
And locks of cluster'd darkness hung,
In clouds, above his martial brow,
While love laughed on his lips below.
"Twice wedded widow! do not bawl—
Twice wooed! twice won! turn not away—
Behold thy husband, Matthew Hall!
Behold thy husband, William Bray!
Oh, then, most constant when untrue!
Forgiveness is contrition's due.
Oh, dearest, and in trouble tried!
Receive me to thy faithful side!
Forgive! and I will quit thee never,
But spurn all falsehood! yea, for ever
Cast o'er thy faults affection's mist,
And humbly kiss thy gentle fist!"

She hung upon his bosom—weak;
She looked the love she could not speak.
He smiled the rose back to her cheek:
"Thou fond and full heart! do not break."
He sealed with kisses warm her lips:
And—as the half-flying red-breast sips
A dew-drop from the lily's breast,
Then, perching on it, trills his song—
So kissed he off her tears, to rest
Soothing the heart-throb, tortured long.
A fairy, shod with gossamer,
Joy, unexpected, came to her,
For past wo to atone.
Her lips lay on his neck embraced;
As if an angel's glance had chas'd
Her troubles, they were gone.

So all said what they had to say;
And all shook hands with William Bray,
Save Jacob, who, in drink profound,
Lay stretched out huge along the ground.

To earth, and earth's love reconciled,
The broken heart of Henry smiled
Through tears, like those which saints in heaven
Shed to behold a foe forgiven.
It was, indeed, a glorious wedding!
So, many stay'd to see the bedding;
And learnedly the learn'd have shewn,
The stocking, then, was duly thrown;
And ancient Night relax'd her brow,
And fidg'd, and felt she knew not how,
While with her grey tongue's watery tip
She lick'd her greenish gums and lip,
And clapp'd her glasses on her nose,
Right loath a sight o' th' fun to lose,
And stoop'd, and star'd, with twinkling eye,
And crisp'd with smiles her cheek awry,
Like an old dishclout laid to dry;
And squeezed her thumb, with gripe uncouth,
And broke her blue and only tooth;
Then thought, like many a matron staid,
Of many a prank that love had play'd,
In times gone by, beneath her shade;
Forgot her crutch, her age, her pain,
And liv'd her young years o'er again.

WHARNCLIFFE.

A Legend.

To the Venerable and Beneficent EARL FITZWILLIAM, the Steward of the Poor, as an humble tribute of respect and gratitude, this "Legend of Wharncliffe" is dedicated, by the Author.

PREFACE.

We have all heard of the Dragon of Wantley; but, as I neither believe in dragons, nor intend to become the historian of the prejudices of the human mind, it may be proper to explain, that this tale of *diablerie*, (reprinted from "Night," a poem,) originated, many years ago, in a dispute with a friend, who, in reference to a pestilential fever then desolating the country, asserted that the "plague," as a subject for poetry, could not be made poetical, or otherwise than disgusting. Professor Wilson had not then proved the contrary, by writing his "City of the Plague." Unconvinced, I determined to attempt a practical refutation of my friend's assertion; and the result was "Wharncliffe," "the *ne plus ultra* of German horror and bombast."—*Monthly Review.*

WHARNCLIFFE.

Where Don's dark waters bathe the rugged feet
Of billowy mountains—silent, motionless,
As if the Almighty's hand had still'd and fix'd
The waves of chaos, in their wildest swell—
Night, can'st thou unalarm'd behold the place
Of Striga's dire enchantments? Near those rocks
(Still call'd the Dragon's Den) her husband died;
And yonder, at the broad oak's foot, (the couch
Of doubly sinful loves,) her whisper'd words
Drove from her sister's husband's guilty cheek
The freezing blood. "Murder my wife!" he said;
"Already are we deep, too deep in blood."
"But, Baltha, while she lives, we are not safe,"
Answer'd the murd'ress; "strongly doth thy wife

Suspect us. Yea, her doubts speak audibly;
And murder will have vengeance!—if we please."

"Doure Striga," he replied, "my troubled sleep
Informs against us! Oh, Guilt hath a tongue
That blabs what he would hide."

Pensive he said,
And weeping, turn'd to go: but with quick hand
She seiz'd on his and, fondly chiding, spake:—
"What, not a kiss at parting? Oh, cold men,
Ye pluck the flower, and lo, it is a weed!
Hoard, then, thy kisses for Rosmilda's lip,
And print them there unask'd. Would she, too, knew
The bitterness of unrequited love!"

She said, but he replied not: mournfully
He turn'd away, and went while sighing, she
Follow'd, with eye and ear, his 'wilder'd steps;
Then sternly spake:—"Did the dead die in vain?
Shall baffled Striga fail? Shall Striga's guilt
Make Striga's rival bless'd?—Anathma! rise!
Star-ruling Striga calls thee. Rise! appear!"

A form of blasted majesty, with eyes
As of the lightning dimmed, not quench'd; with brow
Dark but not sad, and lip, where scorn with pain
Seem'd to contend in angry pride, arose
Before her. "Mighty mistress, here am I:—
What would'st thou with thy slave?" the spirit said.

"Give me," she cried, "a charm that shall destroy
The wife of Baltha;—one of subtlest power,
That no accusing hand may point at me.
Give it me quickly."
"This I cannot do,"
Answer'd the fiend: "shall I call him who can?
I read thy wish—'tis done! Retire awhile,
My potent mistress!—Even now, he spreads
Unmeasur'd wings, as horror black; he shades
The pole with gloom, and casts beneath his flight
Darkness, as when the sun and stars, extinct,
Shall shine no longer on their heav'nly way.
Night veils her eyes, the moon is black with fear,
Ocean looks up and trembles, and heaves back
His tumult infinite. Like hurrying heav'n,
Deluged with fire, and gloom-o'er-canopied,
Idea-swift, he comes. Retire! Retire!"

She shrank behind the rock, and darken'd night
Confess'd the presence of the Prince of Fiends:
Wrath, like a serpent, wrinkled on his brow,
His black lip paled with ire. "And who art thou,
Presumptuous slave!" he cried, "that dar'st to call
Thy master from his sovereignty below?

"Know'st thou not me?" with fearless scorn replied
Anathma: "I am he, who, in the rout
Of rebel angels, *fought* when Satan *fled*."

"I may not waste my words on thee," return'd
The haughty fiend. "The purport of thy spell?"

"Thine, and my mistress, can inform thee best,"
Answer'd Anathma, sneering. "Lo, she comes."
And, from the stung fiend turning, he was gone.

"Oh, victor!" cried the ruin'd angel, high
Raising his clasped hands, "this is indeed
Damnation! I *do* feel thy conqu'ring hand!
And must Abaddon post o'er land and sea
To do a woman's bidding?—What with me?"

He said, and frown'd on Striga, who stood wan
Beneath him, trembling at her own dread power.

"Reluctant I offend thee," pausing said,
Th' enchantress. "Aid me, for I need thy aid!
Hell we control, but passion masters us.
Can'st thou not bid my hated rival breathe
A pestilential air, that she may die,
And no appalling finger point at me?"

She ended, and th' impatient fiend replied:
"*I* cannot—Hades can. Lo, he is here!"
And with a frown, that, as with palsy, shook
Her every limb, he vanished, leaving her
In terror there, but not in loneliness.

She fear'd, and wonder'd; for a stately form,
Faded from grandest, with aurelian wings,
Sun-bright, though blasted, in stern loveliness
Was present, like a dying hero's dream.
"Who art thou?" exclaim'd Striga: "if thou com'st
From heaven, an angel, wherefore art thou here?"

Then answer'd Hades:—"That ask I of thee.
From heav'n I come not—the grave calls me Death:
Can I assist thee?"
"*Wilt* thou if thou can'st?"
Said Striga. "Bid my rival drink thy breath,
And perish." And, all trembling, she retired.

Why gazes Hades on the troubled sky?
"The whirlwind of the motion of a wing
Not less than archangelic, this way comes!"
Fled every star, earth groan'd from all her caves,
And helm'd with gloom, Idona came, and clasp'd
His angel friend. "Dost thou remember me?"
Ask'd the archangel; "Or hath hell's thick gloom
So dull'd thy sense, that thou see'st nothing here
That once was lov'd?"
"I know thee, angel, well,"
Answer'd lorn Hades; "but I know not why
A spirit pure should clasp a demon damn'd."

Pensive, replied Idona, "I was once
Pure. From the host rebellious I return'd
Repentant, and found pardon. But thou heard'st,
Ere join'd th' etherial hosts in conflict strange,
My words approved; why did'st thou then remain
Disloyal? Heav'n beheld thy unassur'd
Contrition, but with more of grief than hope;
And the stern fiat of thy destiny
Condemn'd thee to abide in hell, yet not
The lowest there, the servant of his wrath,
When earth offends him;—and heav'n calls thee
Plague."

Then to the angel helm'd with darkness, spake
His brother:—"Satan and example sway'd
My judgment: I was faithful only there
Where faith was crime."
"But on thy cheek," replied
Idona, "is the path of burning tears
Remorseful. For contrition there is hope."

"Hope! said'st thou, hope?" exclaim'd the fallen one;
"Never, Idona, never may I greet
That heav'nly stranger. Dwellest *thou* in heav'n?"

"No," answer'd then Idona; "but where heav'n
Borders on chaos, and dimensionless
Rocks in perennity of gloom repose,
I make perpetual night my dwelling-place,
And with the majesty of ruin sit,
Awfully lone. The elements, all dark,

Combat before me; or, the hand of God
Writes fiery indignation on the deep,
Which seems, in fragments wild, a universe:
Or continent of deflagrated worlds
Array'd in lightning; or infinitude
Of burning oceans, up in ridges roll'd,
Huger than myriad systems ruin'd. There
I dwell, in horrid solitude, yet not
Heaven's outcast. Sometimes I revisit, calm,
Th' eternal throne, and breathe my native air,
Unblam'd, a duteous guest; for not a sun,
Extinguish'd, ceaseth to illumine space,
But to heaven's silence, sad Idona's voice
Singeth the funeral song of fallen worlds,
While seraphs weep; for well they know, how once
More bright than suns was he who sings their fall."

"Sublime inhabiter of dissonance!"
Said then pale Hades, "what would'st thou with me?
Why, King of Ruin, hast thou left the storms?
Is not eternal desolation thine?
Doth chaos sleep, that hither thou art come,
To seek the gloomy joys of horror here?"

"To punish Striga, I am here," replied
The dark archangel. "With the fiends invok'd,
Comes her destruction. Do her bidding, thou—
E'en as it is appointed; but select
No victim. Loose the blast of pestilence,
But guide it not."
"Shall Chance, then, be the guide
Of havock?" said stern Hades.
Unsurpris'd,
Idona answer'd him:—"Chance is a word
Meaningless. Teems not this doom'd land with crime?
It is not chance that makes a woman's guilt
A sinful people's awful punishment."

He spake—and when he ceas'd, the firm rock reel'd
In deeper darkness; thunder o'er their heads
Roar'd, and was still; then, like the distant sound
Of worlds in ruin hurl'd, a voice was heard—
"Plague, wander wild among the homes of men,
And leave the fates to me." Hades fell prone.
"Did'st thou not hear?" he cried, "Clouds heard, and fled;
Winds and the thunder heard, and where are they?—
Tremendous silence!—Oh, thou palsied earth!
Whose footsteps shook thee? To my soul dismay'd
Speak, cloudless storm! and, soundless lightnings, say
What 'tis ye fear? Was it a dream?" At once,
Gone were the giant angels. Where they stood
Was loneliness; no living thing was there;
But the breeze lifted up the little leaf,
And on the cold rock lay the moon-beam cold.

Two days had passed since Striga call'd the fiends,
And the third night was come. Toss'd on her couch,
Like the wave's foam, th' enchantress. Did she sleep?
If that all-troubled slumber was repose,
There may be rest in hell. The lamp's faint beam
O'er her brow trembled darkly, as in fear.
Did conscience speak to her in dreams? She rose,
Shrieking, and wildly rush'd into the gloom.
"Anathma!" she exclaim'd; "Anathma, rise!
Help! help! Anathma!—double-dealing fiends!"

The Demon was obedient, and he came:
"What would my potent mistress with her slave?"
He said, and paus'd.
"O, listen!" she replied:
"Methought my murder'd husband to my bed
Came, and said—'Rise, most faithful of the chaste!'
He is departed! and his scornful lip
Smil'd as he vanished. Soon he came again,
Smiling, and bearing in his hands a bowl,
Which courteously he offered to my lips.
'Drink, my love, drink!' he said, 'for the last time
We meet: to-morrow! and infinitude
Is cast between us.—Lo, thy husband quaffs
To our eternal parting—pledge me, love!—
'Tis blood—'tis *my* blood—doth it frighten thee?
Thou did'st not fear to shed it—why so pale?
Pledge me, love, pledge me?' Then, with quivering lip
And soundless laugh, he faded slow away.
What may this mean—this warning from the grave?
Who is departed?—Oh, ye flattering fiends,
Much I mistrust ye!—traitor! why that sneer?"

"Be not offended, mistress!" with a smile,
Answer'd the calm Anathma, "we obey
Thy bidding. Thou did'st pray for pestilence,
And pestilence was granted to thy prayer.
Is it not well? An hour since, died thy sire;
Thy hoary mother, while I speak, expires;
Thy brothers three, their children, and their wives,
Vanquish'd, have wrestled with the mighty one;
Three of thy sisters, and their fourteen sons,
Are—what the mighty Striga soon will be—
Food which the worm may not devour and live.
Is it not well? From ye, as from a fount,
Destruction overflows a sinful land.
'Mid thousand deaths, thy relatives are dead—
Dead. Earth is black with funeral, and night
Gleams with the death-torch—but Rosmilda lives,"
He said, and vanished; but his long, loud laugh
Still echo'd in her soul, when nought was heard
But the vex'd river o'er its bed of stone.

T'wards the sad house of Baltha, through the dusk,
Then went the scath'd enchantress. Dark it stood,
And all around was mute as coffin'd dust.
Ah, surely death, or death-like sleep was there!
Would she disturb that stillness?—Suddenly,
A low sound, as of many moving feet,
From within murmur'd: her damp hair stood up!
It was a sound more felt than heard; it spake,
And, in its indistinctness, without words,
Spake clearly. She stood still. The door unclos'd—
Light issu'd pale. Audibly beat her heart,
Albeit unheard; and in the beam she stood,
Dark as a liar before slander'd truth.
Soon slowly forth was Baltha's coffin borne,
Shoulder'd aloft, with many a torch before;
And many a mourner glooming mute behind,
While sweetly sad the funeral anthem wail'd;
And on the long black coffin there was laid
A little one—a baby's bed of death.
She gaz'd, as looks a traitor on the axe;
She mov'd not, breath'd not, till the train had pass'd;
Then sank she senseless as the headless dead.

What voice, as of a seraph singing, calls
The sorceress from her trance? She leans half up;
And, lo! like one new-risen from the dead,
And ready to take wing for heav'n, with face
Wan as the moonlight, in the moonlight cold,
Her eyes uprais'd, her fading lips half-closed,
The beauteous maniac, Baltha's widow, stands
Beside her, as if listening to the stars.
There is a lovely vision in her soul,
Delicious as the gale of Florida,
Which over fragrance bears the tiny bird,
The feather'd bee, dipp'd in the morning—ay,

But she is human ; and reality
Shall wake her from that dream to agonize.
Bare is her bosom ; tears are in her eye ;
Smiles on her cheek ; her long hair floateth loose ;
And, in wild accents, pausing oft, she sings—

Stern woman, get thee gone !
I dread thine eyes of stone ;
For she is calm and dire
Who kill'd my baby's sire.
While many a torch was bright,
They bore him hence in night,
With pomp and wail,
And left me pale.
But still his spirit stay'd with me,
And gently wept and pray'd with me :
Oh, still he hovers near !
Oh, more than ever dear,
My false love now is true !
Still, still his manly form I see,
His white wings gemm'd with dew ;
Again he fondly turns to me
His eyes of fondest blue.
O, bend and let me kiss
That lip, which still is mine !
Take this, my love, and this ;
Take this—but leave me thine ;
Nor turn thy looks of love away
For many a day.
The frown returns not to his brow—
Oh, still his voice is soft and low !
I've view'd that brow with fear ;
That voice, in wrath, oft made me groan ;
But now I weep to hear
It's gentle tone.
I've wish'd I'd ne'er been born,
But kindness conquers scorn.
Sweet, after night, is morn ;
The bright bow after rain ;
Sweet, after winter, is the thorn
That sweetly blooms again ;
I've wished that I had ne'er been born,
But sweet is kindness after scorn.
Snatch'd Striga's demon-shriek
My baby from my sight ?
My beauteous boy, with red, round cheek,
And locks of cluster'd light !
Far be my sister's love from me !
It withers mine and me !
A sister ruined me !
But what, stern lady, dost thou here ?
O, get thee gone !
Thine eyes that never shed a tear—
I dread thine eyes of stone ;
For she, who kill'd my baby's sire,
Is calm and dire.

The sorceress groan'd, and slowly, slowly rose ;
Then tried to kiss her sister's hand ; but she
Snatch'd it away, as from a viper's lip.
" Alas !" said Striga, " there is now no cause.
Know'st thou, then, me ? Beautiful maniac, no.
Oh, envied wretch ! would I were as thou art !
Come to me, madness ! thou whose tears are balm !
Come to me, happy dreamer, with thy tales
That bless while they delude ! Thou wilt not come ;
Thou *wilt* not, but death *shall*." Forth then she drew
A dagger keen, and smiled ; but, with a shriek,
Convuls'd, away she started : from her hand
The dagger dropp'd—" Mercy !" she cried, and gaz'd,
All trembling, on the weapon at her feet.
Whence that unwonted cowardice ? Why shrank
From death desir'd a heart unus'd to fear ?
Even when the giant angels from the rock
Fled, she was smitten, though she knew it not ;
And therefore did Rosmilda look on her
As on a stranger's mien, so chang'd she was !
The breath of pestilence then seiz'd in might
Her shudd'ring vitals. Now, her dull eye flash'd
With sudden fire ; her lips assum'd the hue
Of sulphur flames ; and darkness on her cheek
Devour'd the pallid horror greedily.
In grim convulsions, terribly transform'd,
She strove, or thought she strove, with worse than pain.
Three spectre cannibals seem'd to contend
Which should devour her ; and from each, by turns,
She seemed to snatch her mangled limbs, and bleed.

" What ails she ?" cried the maniac. " Does she dance ?
Why does she dance ? Lolls she her tongue at me ?
She laughs, or hisses. Laughs she ?—If she laughs,
Her laugh is ugly. Do not bite thy tongue ;
'Tis not becoming. How her quivering lips
Foam ! and the blood starts from her staring eyes !
Will her cheeks burst ? Black !—Stranger, is it thou ?
Where is she ? Oh, what foul and horrid thing
Lies where she lay ? It moves not—it is black !"

The maniac, in disgust, withdrew ; and nought
Remain'd of Striga but a shapeless mass,
Putrid, appalling, venomous, and grey.

Night ! thou art silent, thou art beautiful,
Thou art majestic ; and thy brightest moon
Rides high in heav'n, while, on the stream below,
Her image, glimmering as the waters glide,
Floats at the feet of Boulter. There no more
The green graves of the pestilence are seen ;
O'er them the plough hath pass'd ; and harvests wave
Where haste and horror flung th' infectious corse.
Grey Wharncliffe's rocks remain, still to outlive
Myriad successions of th' autumnal leaf.
But where are now their terrors ? Striga's form,
Of largest beauty, wanders here no more ;
No more her deep and mellow voice awakes
The echoes of the forest : and a tale
Of fear and wonder serves but to constrain,
Around the fire of some far moorland farm,
The speechless circle, while th' importunate storm
O'er the bow'd roof growls with a demon's voice.
The poacher whistles in the dragon's den ;
Nor fiend nor witch fears he. With felon foot
He haunts the wizard wave, and makes the rock,
Where spirits walk'd, his solitary seat.
The unsleeping gale moves his dark curls ; the moon
Looks on his wild face. At his feet, his dog
Watches his eye ; and, while no sound is heard,
Save of the booming Don, or startled twig
Of plumy fern, he listens fixedly—
But not in fear. At once he bounds away ;
And the snar'd hare shrieks, quivers—all is still.

So, Wharncliffe of the demons, ends our tale.

MIRANION.

Why shouts Quebec ? Why rolls from all her towers
The peal of gladness, through the midnight air,
O'er moving crowds ? Why do her casements blaze,
Her torches flash, in lines of restless light ?

Great Montcalm is returned with victory,
And moves in triumph through her blazing streets.
Before him glide Canadian maids, white-robed—
War-widow'd virgins, on whose pensive checks
The blush of health had faded into snow.
Life, life, how heav'nly graceful are thy forms,
In joy or sorrow! Soft as sleep they move,
High-waving o'er their heads the spotless lawn,
And scattering roses at his proud steed's feet.
Quebec pours forth her people, young and old,
To see again her great deliverer.
The war-unchilded mother, and the boy
Whose sire had fall'n in battle, came abroad;
Even the friendless, aged, houseless man
Cast on his ruin'd dwelling, as he pass'd,
But one brief glance, then, dancing with the young,
Followed the glad procession and rejoiced.
The soldier's widow sought the crowded streets;
Oh, deem not that her true heart could forget
Her low-laid husband! No! with mournful smiles
She thought of him and wept; but while she view'd
The glittering scene, those sad smiles seem'd to say,
"And he, too, was a soldier." Did not, then,
Love-lorn Miranion of the down-cast eye
Steal to the lattice of her tower to gaze?
She (stately nun! angelic exile! torn
From nature's bosom!) on the various throng
Look'd pale and anxious. Soon again she saw,
Herself unseen, yet mute and timidly,
Though with energic pensiveness, the lord
Of her affections, Montcalm. Loftier seem'd
His martial beauty, darker his large eye,
With triumph fired; and god-like he advanced,
To redivorce her vows. Unhappy maid!
Why was she born? All-ignorant is he
What cause he hath to feel ennobling pride—
Miranion loves him! but he knows it not.
He reins his foamy steed; the mighty crowd
Halts, and is hushed, and living statues hold
Unnumbered torches still! She sees no torch,
She sees no crowd, her eyes are fixed on him.
He waves his hand, he bows in act to speak;
Forward she bends; she listens motionless;
Hangs on his lips, and breathless drinks his speech,
As if the words that should pronounce her death,
Quiver'd for awful utterance on his tongue.

"France is victorious! Ever fortunate!
She, mistress of the nations, shall extend
The limits of her sway. Columbia spreads
The verdure of unbounded wilds, and rolls
Her rivers rivalless, to load with wealth
Our noble country; and the vanquish'd seas
Shall bound her greatness with their amplitude;
For England, like a wintry sun, descends,
Nor shall the sloping orb, returned, arise
Again to glory. Laud the Lord of Hosts!
The maple, and the monarch of the woods,
Magnolia, now in praise lift up their hands,
To measureless Missouri's serpent folds.
I see the unborn glory of this land—
Her sons, high-destin'd, her immortal men,
The stately children of futurity.
Laud, then, the God of Battles, my loved friends!
Calamity hath worn you, war hath sown
Your streets with wo; but better days approach.
Go to your homes, and to your little ones
Say—Ruin hath stalked near us, with a frown
That awed, but blasted not—the storm is past."

So said he, hapless in his prophecy,
And, from the throng retiring, sought repose.
Then, as a catacomb's vast silence, soon
The living scene was hush'd; a silent crowd,
A peopled solitude—the city slept.
Time ever moves, the only traveller
That tires not, rests not; dilatory man
May loiter and may pause; Time pauses not.
How fast his wings have swept away the hours!
And lo! 'tis come! The important hour is come
That shall make children fatherless, and dash
Into despair the confident hope of pride!
Thou, Quebec, sleepest! and thy warrior sons,
In visions, see the host of England worn
With famine, and subdued without a blow.
But that unconquered host abjures repose,
Crowds every boat, and glides, inaudibly,
Down the dark river. Wake, proud city, crest
Thy rocks with thunder, while they yet are thine!

Night hears the bat and owlet flit and swim
Over funereal forests, all asleep;
And mighty rivers, and lakes ocean-like—
That gaudily deck th' eternal wilderness,
And round the virgin waist of solitude,
Enamour'd, twine their long and beauteous arms—
Slumber beneath innumerable stars.
The snow-white porpoise, rising, starts to hear
The prow-divided wave. How sweet, O night,
Thy chaste and unperturb'd sublimity!
Yet, on the shaded river, many a heart
Aches, as the British boats, with muffled oars,
Glide with the stream. Of England's happy fields
Thinks the doom'd soldier, mute—of friends and home—
Of love and quiet—and the parting look,
Engraven on his heart—of weeping wife—
Oh! never more around his neck to clasp
Her arms, or lift his babes to kiss their sire.
Amid the silent faces, there is one
Most thoughtful. O'er the stern he leans in thought,
Where, thro' the glimmering waves, gleams many a face
Of slaughtered warrior, peaceful in his tomb
Of waters; for, tho' heaven's bright queen towers not
Above the mountains; yet, the clouds which wreath
Their highest cliffs, tinged with her mildest beams,
Are visible in magic forms of shade
And brightness; and their edges, silver-fringed,
Tremble, reflected on the glassy stream.
The shrouded heavens, the solemn hour, the vast
River, the rocks enormous, plumed with pines,
That cast their calm shades o'er the gliding wave,
Bend to stern sadness Wolfe's o'er-wearied mind.
Ah! soon the battle-crash shall wake their shades,
And bid their echoes howl; hurl o'er their rocks
The slayer and the slain, and dye with gore
This silent, solemn, loneliest, loveliest scene!

The rocks frowned darker o'er the shoreward fleet.
First on the strand stood Wolfe. Boat followed boat,
And warrior warrior. With uplifted sword
He pointed to the rocks; and swift, and strong,
And resolute, they scaled the steepness there.
Silent, and each assisting each, they rose
From tree to tree, from cliff to cliff; and soon,
High on the summit, twenty veterans waved
Their Highland blades. Mute thousands followed them,
With labour infinite, and cautious tread,
And breathing, half-suppress'd; and painfully
Their slaught'ring cannon weigh'd from pine to pine.

Still dost thou sleep, proud city, unalarm'd!
Hush'd are thy streets; and by the warrior's bed
The sword is idle; and of peace restored
The matron dreaming, sees her sons unscrew
The rifle, and release the useless helm.

But pale Miranion wakes. She, love-lorn maid,
Hath stolen to the heights, unseen, unheard,
Alone, to hear the river, far below,
Murmur unseen; and to indulge fond thoughts,
Sweet wishes, fond and vain. O'er the grey rock
She bends her drooping beauty, and she thinks
How sweetly, pillowed on his bronzed breast,
The peasant's wife is sleeping from her toils;
How well it were to be a soldier's bride,
And couch with love and danger! Holy maid!
What if thou doff thy veil, in man's attire
To stand by Montcalm's side, a seemly page?
But virgin fear, and virgin modesty,
Chas'd that wild thought at once; a painful heat
Rush'd to the cheek, which never erst the blush
Of guilty shame suffused; and "Oh!" she said,
"My God, forgive me! O forgive thy child!
Support me! strengthen me! or let cold earth
Wrap poor Miranion's bosom, and the tears
Of pious sisters mourn a sinless maid!"

Her eyes are red with weeping; on her hand
Her moistened cheek reclines; silent she looks
On the dark river. "Do those shadows move?"
She rises, listens. "What strange sounds are these?"
The hum continues, deepens—hark, a step!
Men—soldiers—what are they? The foe! the foe!"
The gloom
Deepened, the silence deepened.
She trembles, and her eyes are closed with fear.
What shall she do? Obey affection's voice,
And duty's mandate? And, with terror's haste,
She hurried to the camp of sleeping France.

Meantime, o'erwearied Montcalm, on his couch
Extended, sought not sleep, nor had he doff'd
His garments. But the toil of thought intense,
At length o'erpower'd, confused him. Slumbering,
He toss'd from side to side, and sent abroad
The wildly-wandering soul—a reinless steed;
Nor slept, nor waked! Upstarted stiff his locks,
By terror smitten; his bones shook. Motionless,
In gloom and might, before his troubled soul,
A power embodied stood, unspeakable
And hueless. "Sleep'st thou, Montcalm?" said a
voice,
"Still, vanquish'd victor, sleep! Why wake to shame?
Sleep! Wolfe hath torn the laurel from thy brow."

Thus spake the evil dream. Still slumbered he,
Unhappy; and a mute, expressive tear
Stole from his eyelids o'er his swarthy cheek,
When, pale, approach'd unseen, with noiseless step,
Miranion. Fear and love had bleached her cheek;
And with mute, trembling, inexpressible
Emotion she beheld the man beloved!
She heard him sigh—nearer she drew—she stoop'd,
"He weeps," she cried; "Ah, wherefore in his
sleep?"
She looked—she paused; at length, with timid hand,
She touched the hero's forehead, and she said,
"Rise Montcalm!" Up, at once, the warrior sprang,
Confus'd, astonished, and, ere well awake,
His hand had half-undrawn the ready sword;
Then on the maid he gazed, with such a look
Of doubt and fierce surprise, as drove the blood
Back from her fading lip oppressively.
"Who—whence?" he cried, retiring; and he rais'd,
Without outstretched arm, the falchion now unsheath'd.
His voice so stern (love was not in the tone)
Came on her heart like death; and, faltering,
At length she cried, "A friend to France I come!
Wolfe climbs the heights of Abraham, and seeks
The city." Fix'd in awe, she stood unmov'd;
The growing light was fearful in her eye:
He gaz'd upon her, never had he seen
Her face before, never a face so fair—
So mild, so sad, so innocent! She seem'd
The gentle angel of the dead, ordained
To bear the virgin-spirit to its home
Eternal; and if beauty could have mov'd
His stern, ambitious heart, sure he had lov'd
That heavenly pensiveness. He stood—he look'd—
He answer'd not; he turned in thought away.
Slow grew the light, the darkness dimly waned,
And on the mountains walk'd the dawn thro' flowers,
When Montcalm's eye shrank, dark from what it
fear'd—
The banner'd cross, high on the vanquish'd heights,
O'er bright steel waving red, and England's host,
Embattled, like a crimson fortress vast,
Cresting the eminence with hostile arms.

Why bends Miranion o'er a soldier's couch?
To kiss the pillow of her warrior love.
Her heart is filled with joy, which, soon to fade,
Painteth her pale cheek with a cherub's glow;
And for a moment she forgets herself.
Rise, tall Miranion of the pensive smile!
Rise, stately vestal, from thy warrior's couch!
Soon shalt thou tremble o'er thy counted beads,
And, faltering, listen in thine earnest prayer,
Telling to heaven, to heaven alone, thy love;
And vainly calling every saint to save.
He is not fallen yet! But e'er that sun
Shall set and rise, one kiss, thy first and last,
On Montcalm's lip thy breaking heart shall print;
Nor shall the unfeeling taunt of prudery
Flush poor Miranion's faded cheek with shame.
"My hero!" shalt thou say, "for ever mine!
My soul in this chill kiss hath wedded thee."
Then shalt thou grasp his hand fast, with a look
That almost might awake the illustrious dead.
But ere grief close thine eyes for ever, one
Proud spectacle, one long procession more,
Shalt thou behold—sad, slow, funereal pomp,
And nations weeping o'er thy Montcalm's bier.
The victor vanquish'd! That competitor
Worthy of Britain's Wolfe—less fortunate,
Not less heroic—doom'd alike to fall.
Immortal both! Equal their love of fame;
Their genius equal, and their scorn of death.
Then, when the mid-day torches shall no more
Cast the dim gloom of mockery on the slain;
Although no marble tells where thou art laid,
Miranion, night shall love the lonely spot,
The stars shall look in silence on its flowers,
The moon-beams there shall slumber, and the dews
Weep o'er a hapless virgin's modest grave.

INSCRIPTIONS.

I.

Stop here, seducer, stop a while!
A villain's victim sleeps below;
She drank the poison of a smile,
And found that lawless love is wo.
Too true to doubt the lip that lied;
Too trusting maid! too fond to fear;
Too oft they met by Rother's side,
For she was young, and he was dear.
Known by the arrow in her breast,
She mourn'd her bonds—then joined the free:
Now Mary's sorrows are at rest,
And her sad story speaks to thee.

II.

Amid the moss'd old forest's loneliness,
To warn the future poet, and to wake
The tender thought, these lines a studious youth
Carved on this tree. Haply some man of mind,
Hereafter, may the rhymeless verses read,
And drop amid the druid solitude
The tear that angels envy. Chatterton
Lived but to die—perchance without a prayer!
A sable angel, tearing her own heart
With dreadful transport, lured him to her arms!
These wilds will see no more his hopeless smile;
No more the moon-beam in his dewy eye
Will glisten; and no more the cloudless night
Hear, from her starry throne, his lonely steps!
O God! forgive him, though he ask'd thee not!

III.

Stop, man, and read! A nameless person—one
Whom the gay sons of proud frivolity
Knew not, and therefore scorn'd not—slumbers here;
His life was one long day of misery;
Yet sank he not beneath the load of life.
His tested soul, with holy quietness,
Smiled at the malice of adversity,
And rose on wings of humble faith to God.
Reader, do thou resemble this poor man
In all things but his fortunes. Go and speed!

IV.

Name not the sleeper who reposes here,
Lest some good man seeking, serene in thought,
The house of God, blush for the relative
Who lived and died unhappy. Wealth and fame,
Beauty and health, and genius were his own;
But all in vain is Heav'n beneficent
To vicious men! He drown'd his soul in wine;
Shower'd wealth on fools; and, for a harlots smile,
False as his lust, gave beauty, health, and fame.
But winter wrapp'd him in a shroud of snow,
When in the arms of infamy he died;
For, though his false friends fled, she clasp'd him close
There, where he panted on the frozen street;
"I to the last am true to thee," she said;
And, as he died, he heard her, and despair'd!

V.

Now nought is mine! Yet, what I had, I have!
The wings that bore my soul from earth to heaven!
And still, untired, through fields of amplitude,
The pinions of my fervour shall advance
With growing swiftness; for beneath His throne—
Whom seeking, my soul soars unsatisfied—
Time lowly bends, and Power, the giant, kneels,
While Harmony proclaims her Father's name.

MY FIRST SONNET.

Hail to the Christian! Bold is he, to stand
On danger's rock, undaunted, to pursue
The paths of right. What power shall him subdue?
Not thine, all-shunned Misfortune! though thy hand
Waves the keen edge of hunger as a brand;
Nor thine, Prosperity, whose magic dew
Melts the iced rock to water! He shall view
Th' elect of God, with them walk hand in hand.
His emblem is the mountain, capped with snow,
And gnarled with forests; by tempestuous fire
Above scourged vainly; and assail'd below
By ocean's vainly storm-conflicting ire;
Th' Eternal Mountain! that, while tides shall flow,
Will commune with the stars, and bid his pines aspire.

THE EXILE.

To Edward Lytton Bulwer, Esq., who helped me when I was helpless and unknown, I beg leave to dedicate this Poem.

I.

World-lighting flambeau of that awful One
Whose greatness thought hath not conceived! thou bright
And ruby-hair'd similitude of might
Ominiscient yet invisible and lone;
The stillness of all power upon his throne—
The life of life—whose fountain none can tell!
Thou flar'st o'er ocean's nation-girding streams
Fearless of change, as though, indeed, thy beams
Were of the eternal, uncreated light.
High, not secure! bright, not unchangeable!
What dost thou see above, around, below?
Unweeping pride and pleasure only? No!
Vicissitude and ruin are to thee
Familiar. Prosperer! thou look'st on me
And feel'st no pity. But thyself shalt fade,
Extinguish'd, as a taper. He who made
Can unmake all things. He who reigns alone,
The sole unrivall'd—he whose burning throne
Is wheeled on suns—shall quench thee with a frown,
And cast thy dust beneath his axle down;
Crush'd, thou shalt roll no more. No wrinkle yet
Of age insults thy beauty. Thou art bright
As man's vain youth, with harlot joys beset,
Who says, while love, in ecstasy divine,
Seals his warm cheek with lips that glow like thine,
"*My* fortune shall be splendid as thy light."
Thou laughing parent of the woful years!
Hence, with thy beams that mock the sorrowing heart!
In all thy pageantry of flame, depart!
And let me commune with sad night in tears.

II.

But day yet lingers in the gorgeous west,
O'er capes that smile like islands of the bless'd;
His red orb biggens as his beams retire,
And wide Potomac undulates in fire;
While giant clouds, that o'er his hills aspire,
Curtain the setting sun, whose broad brow glows
As if he wish'd, gazing in transport deep,
To look sweet evening into blushing sleep;
And, ere he slumber'd, kiss her in repose—
Then sink to golden rest. Above thy tide,
Wild river! on the headlands at thy side,
With straining eye, the Exile, Alfred, stands,
And thinks, with fever'd soul, of distant lands;
Thinks of lov'd England, whence, by terror led,
Escaped from Worcester's fatal fight, he fled,
And sought in desert woods, o'er ocean cross'd,
To cherish life, when all it's joys were lost.
Dear to that Exile now are memory's tales,
For now they speak of Avon's dewy dales—
Sweet scenes, whose pleasures he no more may share,
And her, his love, who mourns deserted there.

III.

He saw eve's beamy purple fade away;
He watch'd the changeful clouds till all was grey;
He started—"'Twas the waving grass!" he said,
"I *am* not watch'd: or, fluttering overhead,
Did the owl start the oriole from rest?
The humming-bird reposes on the flower;
Fragrance drinks freshness in her richest bower;
High roosts the turkey; on Potomac's breast

The mallard sleeps; and here the rattlesnake,
Couch'd on his coils—the desert's deadly pest!
The bull-frog booms not yet; all accentless,
The listening wave doth not a pebble shake;
Nor doth a sound disturb the loneliness
Of Nature in her slumbers; nor a breeze
Skim o'er the boundless forest, to awake
The tempest-braving pine of centuries;
And, while the stars that guard the tranquil skies
Look down in silence on the silent trees,
High on the mountain's crest the lonely cloud
Reposes, like a giant in his shroud:
How silently! Haply, at this sweet hour,
In England, to the purple-blossom'd heath
The sun-tann'd peat-man plods; while every bower
Weeps in the eye of morn, the drover wakes
With dewy locks; and, while his plaid he shakes,
O'er crumpled grass unbath'd by midnight shower,
Calls his tried dog that lurks the thorn beneath—
Rous'd by whose voice, the bird that loves the sky
Sheds bright pearls from his clover canopy,
And, soaring, sings! And, o'er her fragrant pail,
More sweetly sings the milk-maid in the vale;
And the mist lessens on the distant sea;
And o'er the rooky grove the smoke curls slow;
And fair the halcyon is on writhen tree,
Whose giant arms stretch where the rock is riven;
But fairer far, on quivering waves below,
Are rock, tree, halcyon, and serenest heaven.
Oh, bless'd is he, who, arm'd with dusky gun,
Sees on Britannian wastes the moor fowl run,
Or, flying, fall! Oh, bless'd who hears the bells
Sound o'er the dewy smile of Albion's dells,
While age, and youth, and blissful love repair
To sabbath service, country wake, or fair!
But is my injur'd Emma happy there?"

IV.

He spake in tears of sweetly mingled pain:
What though the heart that nurses love is fain
To build in darkness his unsocial seat?
What though he loves the desert-spirit's sigh?
The tear that visits seldom his sad eye,
Though life hath sweeter tears, may yet be sweet.
Pensive and pale, return'd he to his farm,
Where wealth was his, but not contentment's charm;
And as, with pausing footsteps, he came near,
Sad tones, that spake of wither'd joys once dear—
Tones that his heart acknowledged—met his ear,
And retrospection drank of aconite.
A moment blank he stood, then onward flew;
But, as with lightning blasted, back he drew;
And, trembling, gaz'd—on what appalling sight?
No dusky daughter of the burning day,
Shrank from the slave-herd's whip, uplifted high;
On no dark maid of fervid Africa
Gloated that scourger's Algerenian eye;
But, born where men are free and maids are fair,
From happy Albion wafted o'er the wave,
And late arrived, a convict and a slave,
Was she for whose wild shriek he hunger'd there;
And on her cheek of wo the rose had been.
To Alfred's tongue words came not; but there came
Strength to his arm, and to his spirit flame.
He rush'd the mourner and the pang between;
And, stunn'd beneath his blow, the slave-herd sank,
And rose, and fell, and rose again, and drank
Not with his eyes his victims' starting blood,
But, coughing, drank his own, and ghastly stood.
Then, faint, the convict totter'd to her shed;
Her sable sisters, weeping, stay'd her tread,
And laid on leaves of maize her languid head,
Where soon, by sad dreams visited, she slept,
And wildly, in her broken slumbers, wept.

V.

But Alfred slept not. On his spirit broke
A troubled light; and in his heart awoke
The power that smiles to see the gloom increase,
And, sleeping on the thunder, dreams of peace,
And holiest stillness—the storm's angel, Hope.
Oh, 'reft of her, could man, the insect, cope
With darkness, dread, and danger? He arose,
Leaving the mattrass of his pale unrest,
And walked into the cool and midnight air,
That whisper'd to the wildness of his breast,
Like spirit from the islands of repose,
And almost lull'd to sleep the demon, Care.

VI.

Darkness was spread o'er half the sky. The moon
Slept on her sea of blue. The stars appear'd
To dream around her, in night's awful noon!
Wild lightnings, fluttering distant, fring'd with fire
The growing darkness of the wrathful west;
And, on sublime Potomac's troubled breast,
Convolv'd in seeming agony and ire,
The red reflection, like a dragon, burn'd.
And though the coming thunder was not heard,
Yet, on the breezeless sky perturb'd, in dread
The silent bear his gleaming eye-balls turn'd;
Hoarse croak'd the eagle on the mountain's head;
The buffalo, in ominous horror low'd;
The storm-fiend whisper'd from his desert cave;
The forest shudder'd; the tumultuous cloud
Wander'd in heav'n; black roll'd the moaning
wave.

VII.

Lone stood the cabin of the pallid slave;
And, through the door unclos'd, a pine-torch cast
Its wrinkling beam. With trembling knees, he pass'd
Before the wan light thrice, then stood to gaze.
She slumber'd still, and still she wept in sleep,
While o'er her sad face gleam'd the feeble blaze.
He enter'd, and he could not choose but weep;
For, as he bent above her faded frame,
In murmuring accents faint, she sigh'd his name.
"Emma!" he said; but faulteringly he spoke,
And kiss'd her brow; again—and she awoke,
And shriek'd, and rose half up, convuls'd with fear;
Then, trembling, turn'd, and hid her face in shame.
But he, with soothing words, and many a tear,
Spake to her wo, bidding her yet be glad,
And question'd of her destiny severe,
And how, and why, she met a doom so sad?
She did not lift her eye—she fear'd to look
On him who talk'd of comfort—but it came;
For, like a sweet remember'd vision, stole
His tones of pity on her drooping soul;
Or, like the liquid music of the brook
To thirst's charm'd ear, when the unseen waters
creep
Beneath the blossoming umbrage of the vale,
Among flowers dear to wo, that love to weep.
And thus she told her melancholy tale,
While, o'er the hut, loud moan'd the increasing
gale,
And nearer thunder chas'd the lightning pale.

VIII.

"Oh, thou art good! I did not hope to hear
The voice of kindness in this land of fear.
My love went to the war, and came not back;
Prince Charles, they said, was worsted in the strife:
Anxious, I watch'd on expectation's rack;
But Alfred fled beyond the sea for life.
Soon I became—a mother!—not a wife!
My wrathful parents spurn'd me from their door.

Oh, cherish'd like the choicest garden flower,
And nurtured on the breast of tenderness,
And all unused to the evil hour,
How should their silk-clad daughter face distress?
Where should the out-cast Emma lay her head?
I sought and found a little lowly shed,
Where long we liv'd, resigned and calm, though poor:
My active needle earned our daily bread.
But, sickness, then, by famine follow'd came:
My hungry boy look'd up for food, and pin'd!
My wearying task was profitless; my frame
Enfeebled by disease, unnerv'd my mind.
I would not beg the alms of charity,
Nor ask the legal dole of paupery;
No, I did worse, far worse—Heaven pardon me!
Thou wouldst not think that Emma once was fair;
Yet fair she was, or Envy's self hath lied;
And she had still some sweet and drooping charms;
But she had still some virtue, and some pride.
I turn'd abhorrent from lust's venomous arms;
How *could* I clasp pollution to my heart?
I wept, and pray'd, but want would not depart;
And my boy's asking look, so pale and sad,
Drove me, in one unhappy moment, mad.
No pitying daughter of the rich and free,
With angel looks and bounty, came to me.
Oh, how I envied then the spotless maid,
Who pass'd me, blushing, and almost afraid!
Spurn'd by the base, scarce pitied by the good,
Affliction rush'd upon me, like a flood.
No aid without, and want and wo within;
Deserted—ah, no! left—by him I lov'd;
My life's life was that boy, the child of sin!
What mother's heart could see his tears unmov'd?
I pawn'd the stolen silk!—detected—tried
In the throng'd court I stood, half petrified,
And there was doom'd beyond the billowy tide,
On wild Columbia's shore of tears to groan.

IX.

"As on the strand I stood—and not alone,
But chain'd to others, like in crime and fate,
And female, too, though lost to female fears—
A man approach'd, more old in grief than years,
And kiss'd the fetter'd hand he bath'd with tears,
And, faultering, strove, but strove in vain, to speak.
Oh, he was chang'd! but Emma knew him well;
And with him came forgiveness, though too late.
But when he ask'd forgiveness of his child,
His guilty child, I thought my heart would break!
And when I bade him to my mother bear
A lock of hapless Emma's golden hair—
A kiss from one so lost—and pray'd him tell
If she, too, had the sinful one forgiv'n—
O God! in more than agony, he *smil'd*,
Then rav'd, amid his tears, in laughter wild!
'Emma,' he said, 'thy mother is in Heav'n,
Brought to the grave with sorrow—not by thee—
It was God's will! and none from sin are free.'
Again he kiss'd me, and he turn'd to go;
But no—poor Emma would not have it so;
He saw the boy on whom my sad eye fell,
And kiss'd my little Alfred—then—farewell!
I saw him not, but sobb'd, in sorrow blind,
And heard his faint 'God bless thee!' in the wind.

X.

"Ah, surely in that hour I should have died,
But that my boy clung fondly to my side,
And, not in vain, to soothe his mother tried!
Then came a thought which nature could not bear:
'What! take him from me?' shriek'd my heart's despair.
But little Alfred left the land with me;
And, while the tall ship rush'd into the sea,
He sate, and smil'd upon his mother's knee,
Pleas'd with the sails, the motion, and the deep.
The billows seem'd to rock my cares to sleep.
Oh, there was comfort in the dreadful thought
That far from happiest England I should go,
Where none who knew me could behold my wo,
To taunt the shame that want and sin had brought;
And that the poor companions of my way
Were wretches too, but I less vile than they!
I lov'd to sit upon the airy deck,
While swell'd the moonlight heav'ns, without a speck,
O'er ocean without wrinkle; and I lov'd,
While star-light only glimmer'd through the clouds,
And, arrow-like, and billow-borne, we mov'd,
To hear the fresh gale whistle in the shrouds,
And see the maned waves each other chase,
Like flaming coursers in the endless race.
Then, with delighted terror, from the prow,
High on the mountain billow's summit curl'd,
Down look'd I on the wat'ry vales below,
That, like a tenantless and hopeless world,
Barren and black, and deepening chilly, frown'd.
And, on that far land, whither I was bound,
Enthusiast Hope beheld, nor whip, nor chains;
But hill and shadowy vale seem'd fairy ground,
And groves elysian deck'd the teeming plains;
And airy fingers form'd, with many a flower
Of dulcet breath, a visionary bower;
And there my fancy wander'd with my child,
And saw him strive, with lifted hand, to reach
The grape's dark luxury, or the glowing peach;
And Peace walk'd with us through the balmy wild,
Look'd on my tears, nor only look'd, but smiled.

XI.

"O Heaven! thou shouldst, according to the load,
Apportion strength to bear it on the road!
My boy refused his food, forgot to play,
And sicken'd on the waters, day by day.
He smil'd more seldom on his mother's smile;
He prattled less, in accents void of guile,
Of that wild land, beyond the golden wave,
Where I, not he, was doom'd to be a slave!
Cold o'er his limbs a listless languor grew;
Paleness came o'er his eye of placid blue;
Pale mourn'd the lily, where the rose had died,
And timid, trembling, clung he to my side.
He was my all on earth. Oh, who can speak
The anxious mother's too prophetic wo,
Who sees death feeding on her dear child's cheek,
And strives in vain to think it is not so?
Ah! many a sad and sleepless night I pass'd,
O'er his couch listening, in the pausing blast,
While on his brow, more sad from hour to hour,
Droop'd wan dejection, like a fading flower!
At length, my boy seem'd better, and I slept—
Oh, soundly! but, methought, my mother wept
O'er her poor Emma, and, in accents low,
Said, 'Ah! why do I weep? and weep in vain
For one so lov'd, so lost? Emma, thy pain
Draws to a close! e'en now is rent in twain
The loveliest link that binds thy breast to wo.
Soon, broken heart, we soon shall meet again!'
Then o'er my face her freezing hand she cross'd,
And, bending, kiss'd me, with her lip of frost.
I waked; and, at my side—Oh! still and cold!—
Oh! what a tale that dreadful chillness told!
Shrieking, I started up, in terror wild;
Alas! and had I liv'd to dread my child?
Eager, I snatched him from his swinging bed;
His limbs were stiff—he mov'd not—he was dead!

XII.

"O let me weep!—what mother would not weep
To see her child committed to the deep?—
All lifeless, o'er his marble forehead roll'd,
The third night saw his locks repose in gold.
Methinks 'twas moonlight, and a torch cast wide
Its lanthorn'd radiance o'er the umber'd tide,
As wan on deck he lay, serenely fair,
And, oh! so like his sire! that man of care,
(From home, and hope, and all he lov'd, impell'd,)
Who ne'er his child, in life, or death, beheld,
And *could* not come, my breaking heart to share!
No mournful flowers, by weeping fondness laid,
Nor pink, nor rose, droop'd on his breast display'd,
Nor half-blown daisy, in his little hand.
Wide was the field around, but 'twas not land.
His features wore a sweet and pensive grace,
And death was beauty on his silent face.
No more his sad eye look'd me into tears!
Clos'd was that eye beneath his pale cold brow;
And on his calm lips, which had lost their glow,
But which, though pale, seem'd half unclos'd to speak,
Loiter'd a smile, like moonlight on the snow.
I gazed upon him still—not wild with fears—
Gone were my fears, and present was despair!
But, as I gazed, a little lock of hair,
Stirr'd by the breeze, play'd, trembling, on his cheek;
O God! my heart!—I thought life still was there!
But, to commit him to his watery grave,
O'er which the winds, unwearied mourners, rave—
One, who strove darkly sorrow's sob to sway,
Uprais'd the body; thrice I bade him stay;
For still my wordless heart had much to say,
And still I bent, and gazed, and, gazing, wept.
At last, my sisters, with humane constraint,
Held me, and I was calm as dying saint;
While that stern weeper lowered into the sea
My ill-starr'd boy! deep—buried deep he slept.
And then I look'd to heav'n in agony,
And pray'd to end my pilgrimage of pain,
That I might meet my beauteous boy again!
Oh, had he liv'd to reach this wretched land,
And then expir'd—I would have bless'd the strand.
But, where my poor boy lies I may not lie;
I cannot come, with broken heart, to sigh
O'er his lov'd dust, and strew with flowers his turf:
His pillow hath no cover but the surf!
I may not pour the soul-drop from mine eye
Near his cold bed; he slumbers in the wave!
Oh, I will *love* the sea, because it is his grave!"

XIII.

Weeping, she saw not him whose swimming eye
O'erflowed with bitterness and agony;
But, when he smote his breast with frenzied force,
And, stamping, curs'd himself in dread remorse;
Then started she—as one who sleeps with pain
O'erwearied starts awake, but sleeps again;
And soon, more calm, with alter'd voice, she said—
"Perhaps my boy had liv'd, had Alfred stay'd!
Ah! wherefore fled he, hopeless and afraid?
And, ah! why fled not Emma at his side?
I on the scaffold would with him have died.
Without a look, a kiss, a tear, he went;
Unheard by Emma, every prayer he sent
To heav'n, (while grim Mischance stood by, and smil'd,)
To bless the mother of his unborn child!
Nor after weeks, and months, and mournful years,
Did his dear letter, long, and stain'd with tears,
Bring to her bosom, o'er the waters wide,
Comfort and hope, which nought could bring beside!
Alas! he fled not, but at Worcester died!"

XIV.

"O blame him not!" exclaim'd the self-blam'd youth,
"If he has err'd, forgive his fault, forgive!
And canst thou doubt thy Alfred's love and truth?
And deem him false, who lives to bid thee live?
We both live, Emma, happier days to see;
Behold, 'tis Alfred's self, preserv'd for thee!
Come to my heart! thou still art all to me."

XV.

Ah, clasp'd he death? or did she lifeless seem?
Slackening his grasp, he stoop'd but heard no sigh!
Then paleness blush'd; and life's returning beam
Relum'd the faded azure of her eye.
Faintly she strove to clasp him to her side.
"Was it, indeed, my angel's voice?" she cried;
"And wilt thou take the convict to thy breast?
And shall the vile, the outcast, the oppress'd,
The poor and trodden worm, again be bless'd?
Ah, no, no—heav'n ordaineth otherwise!
My love!—we meet too late!—thy Emma dies."

XVI.

Then, with clasp'd hands, and fervent hearts dismay'd,
That she might live for him, both mutely pray'd.
But, o'er their silence burst the heavy blast;
And, wrapp'd in darkness, the sky-torrent pass'd;
And down the giants of the forest dash'd;
And, pale as day, the night with lightning flash'd;
And, through aw'd heav'n, a peal, that might have been
The funeral dirge of suns and systems, crash'd:
More dread, more near, the bright blue blaze was seen,
Peal following peal, with direr pause between.
On the wild light she turn'd her wilder eye,
And grasp'd his hands, in dying agony,
Fast, and still faster, as the flash rush'd by.
"Spare me!" she cried. "Oh, thou destroying rod!
Hark! 'tis the voice of unforgiving God!—
A mother murder'd, and a sire in wo!
Alfred, the deed was mine! for thee, for thee,
I broke her heart, and turn'd his locks to snow!
Hark! 'tis the roaring of the mighty sea!
Lo, how the mountain-billows fall and rise!
And while their rage, beneath the howling night,
Lifts my boy's tresses to the wild moonlight,
Yet doth the wretch, th' unwedded mother, live,
Who, for those poor unvalued locks would give
All, save her hope to kiss them in the skies!
But see! he rises from his wat'ry bed,
And at his guilty mother shakes his head!
There, dost thou see him, blue and shivering stand,
And lift at thee his little threatening hand?
Oh, dreadful!—Hold me!—Catch me!—Die with me!—
Alas! that must not, and it should not be!
No—pray that both our sins may be forgiv'n;
Then come! and heav'n will—will, indeed be heav'n!"

XVII.

He felt her slackening grasp his hand forego,
And grasp'd more firmly hers, in speechless wo.
Quiver'd her cheek, with death's convulsions streak'd:
Still gaz'd he—all was fixed! he started up, and shrick'd.

XVIII.

No sound is heard, save of the brook increas'd;
The weary cloud is still. The blast hath ceas'd

To rend the wildly fluctuating sky,
And tear the tall pine from his place on high.
Meek quiet on the freshen'd verdure sleeps;
Less frequent, from the beauteous cedar weeps
The heavy rain-drop on the flower beneath;
And, fainter round the hills, the dying gale
Murmurs the requiem of departed night;
While, like bless'd isles, the woods emerge in light,
In placid light, fair as the brow of death
O'er which that mourner bends, so lost and pale.
"Emma, how sweet the calm that follows storms!
How sweet to sleep in tears, and wake in heav'n!"
Morn soon will smile on Nature's drooping charms,
And smooth the tresses which the night hath riven;
But no sun shall arise that wretch to cheer;
Alas! his grief despairs, and hath no tear!
From heav'n's deep blue, the stars steal, one by one;
Pale fades the moon—still paler—she is gone.
As yet, no marshall'd clouds in splendour roll'd,
See, on Potomac's breast their mirror'd gold;
Yet, eastward, lo! th' horizon, forest-fring'd,
Blushes—and dusky heights are ruby-ting'd!
Lo! like a warrior in impatient ire,
On mailed steed, fire-scarf'd, and helm'd with fire,
Forth rides the sun, in burning beauty strong,
Hurling his bright shafts, as he darts along!
Oh, not more splendidly emerged the morn
When light, and life, and blissful love were born,
And day and beauty, ere his woes began,
Smil'd first elysium on the soul of man,
And—while no cloud in stillest heav'n was seen—
O'er ocean's waveless magnitude serene,
Rose, all on flame his vital race to run,
In dreadless youth, how proudly rose that sun!
And, see! o'er Emma's still and snowy cheek
There comes a glow, ethereal, heav'nly, meek,
As if a lily blush'd to meet the light!
But what, wan Exile! may be said to thee?
Look'st thou on death? then death is fair to see.
The sunbeams mingle with her lifeless hair;
From her clos'd eye a tear is stealing slow;
Life seems to linger on the silence there,
Like fragrance in a gather'd rose of snow;
But, oh! that kiss of ice!—despair!—despair!—
Ah! woods and waves, and heav'n and earth are bright;
But on the hopeless Exile's heart—'tis night!

BOTHWELL.

A Dramatic Poem.

To my great Master, ROBERT SOUTHEY, who Condescended to teach me the Art of Poetry, I most respectfully dedicate this Drama.

SCENE—*Inside of a dungeon, in a fortress on the coast of Norway.* BOTHWELL *sleeping.* RHINVALT *gazing through a barred window on the rocks, and stormy sea below.*

Rhin. Splendour in heaven, and horror on the main!
Sunshine and storm at once—a troubled day.
Clouds roll in brightness, and descend in rain.
How the waves rush into the rocky bay,
Shaking th' eternal barriers of the land!
And ocean's face is like a battle plain,
Where giant demons combat hand to hand;
While, as their voices sink and swell again,
Peace, listening on the rainbow, bends in pain.
Where is the voice, whose stillness man's heart hears,
Like dream'd-of music, wordless, soft, and low?
The voice, which dries on Sorrow's cheek her tears,
Or, lest she perish, bids the current flow?
That voice the whirlwind in his rage reveres;
It bids the blast a tranquil sabbath keep:
Lonely as death, harmonious as the spheres,
It whispers to the wildness of the deep,
'Till, calm as cradled babe, the billows sleep.
Oh, careless of the tempest in his ire,
Blush, ruby glow of western heav'n! Oh, cast
The hue of roses, steep'd in liquid fire,
On ocean in his conflict with the blast,
And quiver into darkness, and retire,
And let wild day to calmest night subside;
Let the tired sailor from his toil respire,
The drench'd flag hang, unmoving, o'er the tide,
And, pillow'd on still clouds, the whirlwind ride!
Then, Queen of Silence, robe thee, and arise,
And, through the barr'd loop of this dungeon old,
Visit, once more, its inmate's blasted eyes!
Let him again, though late, thy light behold!
Soulless, not sightless, have his eye-balls roll'd,
Alike, in light and darkness, desolate.
The storm beat on his heart—he felt no cold;
Summer look'd on him, from heaven's fiery gate—
Shivering, he scowl'd, and knew not that he scowl'd.
Unweeping, yet perturb'd; his bed a stone;
Bonds on his body—on his mind a spell;
Ten years in solitude, (yet not alone,)
And conscious only to the inward hell;
Here hath it been his hideous lot to dwell.
But heav'n can bid the spirit's gloom depart,
Can chase from his torn soul the demon fell,
And, whispering, find a listener in his heart.
O let him weep again! then, tearless dwell.
In his dark, narrow home, unrung by passing bell!

[*A long pause. Loud thunder; and, after an interval, thunder heard remote.*]

The storm hath ceas'd. The sun is set: the trees
Are fain to slumber; and, on ocean's breast,
How softly, yet how solemnly, the breeze,
With unperceiv'd gradation, sinks to rest!
No voice, no sound is on the ear impress'd;
Twilight is weeping o'er the pensive rose;
The stoat slumbers, coil'd up in his nest;
The grosbeak on the owl's perch seeks repose;
And o'er the heights, behold! a pale light glows.
Wak'd by the bat, up springs the startled snake;
The cloud's edge brightens—lo, the moon! and grove,
And tree, and shrub, bath'd in her beams, awake,
With tresses cluster'd like the locks of love.
Behold! the ocean's tremor! slowly move
The cloud-like sails; and, as their way they urge,
Fancy might almost deem she saw, above,
The streamer's chasten'd hues; bright sleeps the surge,
And dark the rocks, on ocean's glittering verge.
Now lovers meet, and labour's task is done.
Now stillness hears the breathing heifer. Now
Heav'ns azure deepens; and, where rock-rills run,
Rest on the shadowy mountain's airy brow
Cloud's that have ta'en their farewell of the sun;
While calmness, reigning o'er that wintry clime,
Pauses and listens;—hark! the evening gun!
Oh, hark!—the sound expires! and silence is sublime.
Moonlight o'er ocean's stillness! on the crest
Of the poor maniac, moonlight!—He is calm;
Calmer he soon will be in endless rest:—
O, be thy coolness to his brow as balm,
And breathe, thou fresh breeze, on his burning breast!
For memory is returning to his brain;
The dreadful past, with worse than wo impress'd;

And torturing time's eternity of pain ;
The curse of mind returns ! O take it back again!
[*A long pause, during which he bends anxiously over Bothwell.*]
Alas! how flutteringly he draws his breath!
Both. My blessed Mary !
Rhin. Calmer he appears—
Sad, fatal symptom ! swift approaches death.
Both. Mary ! a hand of fire my bosom sears.—
O do not leave me !—Heavenly Mary !—years,
Ages of torture pass'd, and thou cam'st not ;
I waited still, and watch'd, but not in tears ;
I could not weep ; mine eyes are dry and hot,
And long, long since, to shed a tear forgot.
A word! though it condemn me!—stay! she's gone!
Gone ! and to come no more ! [*He faints.*]
Rhin. Ah, is it so ?
His pilgrimage is o'er, his task is done ;
How grimly still he lies ! yet his eyes glow,
As with strange meaning. Troubled spirit, go !
How threateningly his teeth are clench'd ! how fast
He clutches his grasp'd hair!—hush !—breathless? No !
Life still is here, though withering hope be past ;
Come, bridegroom of despair ! and be this sigh his last.
Both. Where am I ? What art thou ?
Rhin. Call me a friend,
And this a prison.
Both. Voice of torture, cease !—
Oh, it returns !—terrific vision, end !—
When was it ? Yesterday ? no matter—peace !
I do remember, and too well, too well !
Rhin. How is it with thee ?
Both. Why wilt thou offend ?—
Ha ! all ye fiends of earth, and ye of hell,
I surely *am* awake ! Thine angel send,
Thou, King of Terrors call'd, and break this hideous spell !
Rhin. A tear ? and shed by thee ?
Both. I breath'd in flame ;
The sleepless worm of wrath was busy here ;
When—ah, it was a dream !—my lady came,
Lovely and wan in wo, with the big tear
To cool my fever'd soul. In love and fear,
O'er me she bent, as at the Hermitage,
When (maim'd in conflict with the mountaineer)
She kiss'd my wounds, while Darnley swell'd with rage;
Tears only ! not a word ! she fled !—and I am here.
She fled ; and then, within a sable room,
Methought I saw the headsman and the axe ;
And men stood round the block, with brows of gloom,
Gazing, yet mute, as images of wax ;
And, while the victim moved to meet her doom,
All wept for Mary Stuart. Pale, she bent,
As when we parted last ; yet towards the tomb
Calmly she look'd, and, smiling, prayers up sent
To pitying heav'n. A deep and fearful boom
Of mutter'd accents rose, when to the ground
The sever'd head fell bleeding ! and, aghast,
Horror on horror star'd. And then a sound
Swell'd, hoarsely yelling, on the sudden blast,
As of a female voice that mimick'd wo ;
But, as above that hall of death it pass'd,
'Twas changed into a laugh, wild, sullen, low,
Like a fiend's growl, who, from heav'n's splendour cast,
Quaffs fire and wrath, where pain's red embers glow.
Do I not know thee ? I'm forgetful grown :
Where did I see thee first ?
Rhin. Here, even here ;
Thy ten years' comrade—still to thee unknown.
In all that time thou didst not shed a tear
Until this hour. Raving, with groan on groan,
Thou spak'st of more than horror, and thy moan
Was torture's music. O'er thy forehead hot
Thine hands were clasp'd ; and still wast thou alone,
Brooding o'er things that have been, and are not,
Though I was with thee, almost turn'd to stone,
Here, where I pin'd for twenty years before
Thy coming.
Both. Thirty years a prisoner !
Here, didst thou say ?
Rhin. Ay, thirty years and more.
My wife !—O never may I look on her !
My children !
Both. Didst thou spill man's blood ; or why ?
Rhin. I spilt man's blood in battle. Oh, no more,
Liberty, shall I breath thy air on high
Where the cloud travels, or along the shore
When the waves frown, like patriots sworn to die !
I met th' oppressors of my native land,
(Wide wav'd their plumes o'er Norway's wilds afar,)
I met them, breast to breast, and hand to hand,
O'ercome, not vanquish'd, in the unequal war :
And this is Freedom's grave.
Both. Freedom ? Thou fool,
Deserving chains ! Freedom ?—a word to scare
The sceptred babe. Of thy own dream thou tool
And champion, white in folly ! From me far
Be rant like thine—of sound a senseless jar.
Rhin. Say, who art thou that rav'st of murdered kings,
And dar'st, before her champion vow'd, profane
The name of Freedom ? Long forgotten things
To my soul beckon ; and my hand would fain
(Stung by thy venom) grasp a sword again,
In battle with these tyrants ! Gone ?—alas !
'Tis the death-rattle in the throat—his pain
Draws to a close. Again ? Dark spirit, pass !
Both. Lift, lift me up ! that on my burning brain
The pallid light may shine ! and let me see
Once more the ocean. Thanks ! Hail, placid deep !
Oh, the cold light is comfort ! and to me
The freshness of the breeze comes like sweet sleep
To him whose tears his painful pillow steep !
When last I saw those billows they were red.
Mate of my dungeon ! know'st thou why I weep ?
My chariot, and my war-horse, and my bed,
Ocean, before me swells, in all its glory spread.
Lovely ! still lovely Nature ! and a line
Of quivering beams, athwart the wavy space,
Runs like a beauteous road to realms divine,
Ending where sea and stooping heav'n embrace.
Crisp'd with glad smiles is ocean's aged face ;
Gemm'd are the fingers of his wrinkled hand.
Like glittering fishes, in the wanton race,
The little waves leap laughing to the land,
Light following light—an everlasting chase.
Lovely, still lovely ! chaste moon, is thy beam
Now laid on Jedburgh's mossy walls asleep,
Where Mary pin'd for me ; or dost thou gleam
O'er Stirling, where I first, in transport deep,
Kiss'd her bless'd hand, when Darnley bade her weep ;
Or o'er Linlithgow and the billows blue,
Where (captur'd on the forest-waving steep)
She almost fear'd my love, so dear and true ;
Or on that sad field, where she could but look adieu ?
Rhin. Weep on ! if thou, indeed, art he whose fame
Hath pierc'd th' oblivion even of this tomb,
Where life is buried, and whose fearful name
Amazement loves to speak, while o'er thy doom,
Trembling, he weeps. *Did* she, whose charms make tame

All other beauty, Scotland's matchless Queen,
Creation's wonder, on that wither'd frame,
Enamour'd smile? Sweet tears there are, I ween;
Speak then of her, where tears are shed more oft
than seen.
Both. Perhaps the artist might, with cunning
hand,
Mimic the morn on Mary's lip of love;
And fancy might before the canvass stand,
And deem he saw th' unreal bosom move.
But who could paint her heav'nly soul, which glows
With more than kindness—the soft thoughts that
rove
Over the moonlight of her heart's repose—
The wish to hood the falcon, spare the dove,
Destroy the thorn, and multiply the rose?
Oh, had'st thou words of fire, thou could'st not
paint
My Mary in her majesty of mind,
Expressing half the queen and half the saint!
Her fancy, wild as pinions of the wind,
Or sky-ascending eagle, that looks down,
Calm, on the homeless cloud he leaves behind;
Yet beautiful as freshest flower full blown,
That bends beneath the midnight dews reclin'd;
Or yon resplendent path, o'er ocean's slumber
thrown.
'Twas such a night—O ne'er, bless'd thought,
depart!—
When Mary utter'd first, in words of flame,
The love, the guilt, the madness of her heart,
While on my bosom burn'd her cheek of shame.
Thy blood is ice, and, therefore, thou wilt blame
The queen, the woman, the adulterous wife,
The hapless, and the fair!—Oh, but her name
Needs not thy mangling! Her disastrous life
Needs not thy curse! Spare, slanderer, spare her
fame!
Then wore the heav'ns, as now, the clouded veil;
Yet mark'd I well her tears, and that wan smile
So tender, so confiding, whose sweet tale,
By memory told, can even now beguile
My spirit of its gloom! for then the pale
Sultana of the night her form display'd,
Pavilion'd in the pearly clouds afar,
Like brightness sleeping, or a naked maid,
In virgin charms unrivall'd; while each star,
Astonish'd at her beauty, seem'd to fade—
Each planet, envy-stung, to turn aside—
Veiling their blushes with their golden hair.
Oh! moment rich in transport, love, and pride!
Big, too, with wo, with terror, with despair!
While, wrestling thus, I strive to choak my groan,
And, what I cannot shun, may learn to bear,
That moment is immortal, and my own!
Fate from my grasp *that* moment cannot tear!
That moment for an age of torture might atone!
Poor Rizio of the flute, whom few bewail;
Worth Mary's tears, was well worth Darnley's hate.
Jealous again! Why, who could e'er prevail,
Monarch or slave, in conflict with his fate?
Behold the King of——Hear it not, chaste night!
King! keep no monkey that has got a tail!
In nought but things emasculate delight!
Let no fly touch her, lest it be a male!
And, like the devil, infest a paradise in spite!

Pride, without honour! body, without soul!
The heartless breast a brainless head implies.
If men are mad, when passion scorns control,
And self-respect with shame and virtue flies,
Darnley hath long been mad.—Thou coxcomb rude!
Thou reptile, shone on by an angel's eyes!
Intemperate brute, with meanest thoughts imbued!
Dunghill! would'st thou the sun monopolize?
Would'st *thou* have Mary's love? for what? Ingratitude.

The quivering flesh, though torture-torn, may live;
But souls, once deeply wounded, heal no more:
And deem'st thou that scorn'd woman can forgive?
Darnley, thou dream'st, but not as heretofore!
Mary's feign'd smile, assassin-like, would gore;
There is a snake beneath her sorrowing eye;
The crocodile can weep: with bosom frore
O'er thy sick-bed she heaves a traitorous sigh:
Ah, do not hope to live! she knows that thou shalt
die.

Yet Mary wept for Darnley, while she kiss'd
His murderer's cheek at midnight. Sad was she;
And he, who then had seen her, would have miss'd
The rose that was not where it wont to be,
Or marvell'd at its paleness. None might see
The heart, but on the features there was wo.
Then put she on a mask, and gloomily—
For dance and ball prepar'd—arose to go:
"Spare, spare my Darnley's life!" she said—but
mean'd she so?

Now bends the murderer—Mark his forehead fell!
What says the dark deliberation there?—
Now bends the murderer—Hark!—it is a knell!—
Hark!—sound or motion? 'Twas his cringing hair.
Now bends the murderer—wherefore doth he start?
'Tis silence—silence that is terrible!
When he hath business, silence should depart,
And maniac darkness, borrowing sounds from hell,
Suffer him not to hear his throbbing heart?—
Now bends the murderer o'er the dozing King,
Who, like an o'er-gorg'd serpent, motionless,
Lies drunk with wine, a seeming-senseless thing;
Yet his eyes roll with dreadful consciousness,
Thickens his throat in impotent distress,
And his voice strives for utterance, while that wretch
Doth on his royal victim's bosom press
His knee, preparing round his neck to stretch
The horrible cord. Lo! dark as th' alpine vetch,
Stares his wide-open, blood-shot, bursting eye,
And on the murderer flashes vengeful fire;
While the black visage, in dire agony,
Swells, like a bloated toad that dies in ire,
And quivers into fixedness!—On high
Raising the corpse, forth into th' moonlight air
The staggering murderer bears it silently,
Lays it on earth, sees the fix'd eye-ball glare,
And turns, affrighted, from the lifeless stare.
Ho! fire the mine! and let the house be rent
To atoms!—that dark guile may say to fear,
"Ah, dire mischance! mysterious accident!
Ah, would it were explain'd! ah, would it were!
Up, up, the rushing, red volcano went,
And wide o'er earth, and heav'n, and ocean flash'd
A torrent of earth-lightning sky-ward sent;
O'er heav'n, earth, sea, the dread explosion crash'd;
Then, clattering far, the downward fragments dash'd.
Roar'd the rude sailor o'er th' illumin'd sea,
"Hell is in Scotland!" Shudder'd Roslin's hall,
Low'd the scar'd heifer on the distant lea,
Trembled the city, shriek'd the festival,
Paus'd the pale dance from his delighted task,
Quak'd every masker of the splendid ball;
Rais'd hands, unanswer'd questions seem'd to ask;
And there was one who lean'd against the wall,
Close pressing to her face, with hands convuls'd, her
mask.
And night was *after* that, but *blessed* night
Was never more! for thrilling voices cried

To th' dreaming sleep, on th' watcher's pale affright,
"Who murder'd Darnley? Who the match applied?
Did Hepburn murder Darnley?"—"Fool!" replied
Accents responsive, fang'd with scorpion sting,
In whispers faint, while all was mute beside,
"'Twas the Queen's husband that did kill the King!"
And o'er the murderer's soul swept horror's freezing wing.

Rhin. Terrific, but untrue!—*Have* such things been?
Thy looks say ay! and dire are they to me.
Unhappy King! and more unhappy Queen!
But who the murderer?

Both What is that to thee?
Think'st thou *I* kill'd him? Come but near my chain,
Thou base suspector of scath'd misery!
And I will dash the links into thy brain,
And lay thee (champion of the can't-be-free!)
There, for thine insolence—never to rise again.
[*He faints.*]

Rhin. Alas! how far'st thou now? Darkness hath chas'd
The dreadful paleness from thy face; thine eye,
Upturn'd, displays its white; thy cheek is lac'd
With quivering tortuous folds; thy lip, awry,
Snarls, as thou tear'st the straw; the speechless storm
Frowns on thy brow, where drops of agony
Stand thick and beadlike; and, while all thy form
Is crumpled with convulsion, threat'ningly
Thou breathest, smiting th' air, and writhing like a worm.

Both. Treason in *arms*!—Sirs, ye are envious all.
To Mary's marriage did ye not consent?
Do you deny your signatures—this scrawl
Of your vile names? True, I do not repent
That I divorc'd my wife to wed the Queen;
True, I hate Mar; true, I scorn Huntley's bawl;
True, I am higher now than I have been—
And will remain so, though your heads should fall.
Craig, of the nasal twang, who pray'st so well!
Glencairn, of th' icy eye, and tawny hide!
If I am prouder than the Prince of Hell,
Are ye all meanness that ye have no pride?
My merit is my crime. I love my sword,
And that high sin for which the angels fell;
But still agrees my action with my word;
That your's does *not* so, let rebellion tell.
Submit! or perish here! or elsewhere—by the cord.

My comrades, whose brave deeds my heart attests,
Be jocund!—But, ah, see their trembling knees!
Their *eyes* are vanquish'd—not by th' tossing crests,
But by yon rag, the pestilence of the breeze,
Painted with villanous horror! In their breasts
Ardour and manliness make now with fear
A shameful treaty, casting all behests
That honour loves, into th' inglorious rear.
By heav'n, their cowardice hath sold us here!
Ha! dastards, terror-quell'd as by a charm,
What! steal ye from the field?—My sword for thee,
Mary! and courage for his cause! *this* arm
Shall now decide the contest!—Can it be?
Did Lindsay claim the fight?—and still lives he?
He lives, and I to say it. Hell's black night
Lower'd o'er my soul, and Darnley scowl'd on me,
And Mary would not let her coward fight,
But bade him barter all for infamy!
Dishonour'd, yet unburied! Morton's face
Wrinkled with insult; while, with cover'd brow,
Bravest Kirkaldy mourn'd a foe's disgrace;
And Murray's mean content was mutter'd low.
Pale, speechless Mary wept, almost asham'd
Of him she mourn'd. Flash'd o'er my cheek the glow
Of rage against myself; and undefam'd,
Worse than my reputation, and not slow,
I left my soul behind, and fled in wordless wo.

Then ocean was my home, and I became
Outcast of human kind, making my prey
The pallid merchant; and my wither'd name
Was leagued with spoil, and havock, and dismay;
Fear'd, as the lightning fiend, on steed of flame—
The Arab of the sky. And from that day
Mary I saw no more. Sleepless desire
Wept; but *she* came not, even in dreams, to say,
(Until this hour,) "All hopeless wretch, expire!"

Rhin. A troubled dream thy changeful life hath been
Of storm and splendour. Girt with awe and power,
A Thane illustrious; married to a queen;
Obey'd, lov'd, flatter'd; blasted in an hour;
A homicide; a homeless fugitive
O'er earth, to thee a waste without a flower;
A pirate on the ocean, doom'd to live
Like the dark osprey! Could Fate sink thee lower?
Defeated, captur'd, dungeon'd, in this tower
A raving maniac!

Both. Ah, what next? the gloom
Of rayless fire eternal, o'er the foam
Of torment-uttering curses, and the boom
That moans through horror's everlasting home!
Wo, without hope—immortal wakefulness—
The brow of tossing agony—the gloam
Of flitting fiends, who, with taunts pitiless,
Talk of lost honour, rancorous, as they roam
Through night, whose vales no dawn shall ever bless!—
Accursed who outlives his fame!—Thou scene
Of my last conflict, where the captive's chain
Made me acquainted with despair! serene
Ocean, thou mock'st my bitterness of pain,
For thou, too, saw'st me vanquish'd, yet not slain!
O, that my heart's-blood had but stain'd the wave,
That I had plung'd never to rise again,
And sought in thy profoundest depths a grave!

White billow! know'st thou Scotland? did thy wet
Foot ever spurn the shell on her lov'd strand?
There hast thou stoop'd, the sea-weed gray to fret—
Or glaze the pebble with thy crystal hand?
I am of Scotland. Dear to me the sand
That sparkles where my infant days were nurs'd!
Dear is the vilest weed of that wild land
Where I have been so happy, so accurs'd!
Oh, tell me, hast thou seen my lady stand
Upon the moonlight shore, with troubled eye,
Looking t'wards Norway? did'st thou gaze on her?
And did she speak of one far thence, and sigh?
O, that I were with thee a passenger
To Scotland, the bless'd Thule, with a sky
Changeful, like woman! would, oh, would I were!
But vainly hence my frantic wishes fly.
Who reigns at Holyrood? Is Mary there?
And does she sometimes shed, for him once lov'd, a tear?

Farewell, my heart's divinity! To kiss
Thy sad lip into smiles of tenderness;
To worship at that stainless shrine of bliss;
To meet th' elysium of thy warm caress;
To be the prisoner of thy tears; to bless
Thy dark eye's weeping passion; and to hear
The word, or sigh, soul-toned, or accentless,
Murmur for one so vile, and yet so dear—

Alas! 'tis mine no more!—Thou hast undone me,
Fear!

Champion of Freedom, pray thee, pardon me
My laughter, if I now can laugh!—(in hell
They laugh not)—he who doth now address thee
Is Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell. Hark! my knell!
The death-owl shrieks it. Ere I cease to fetch
These pantings for the shroud, tell me, O tell!
Believ'st thou God?—Blow on a dying wretch,
Blow, wind that com'st from Scotland!—Fare-thee-well!
The owl shrieks—I shall have no other passing-bell.

Rhin. As from the chill, bright ice the sunbeam flies,
So (but reluctant) life's last light retires
From the cold mirror of his closing eyes:
He bids the surge adieu!—falls back—expires!
No passing bell? Yea, I that bell will be;
Pale night shall hear the requiem of my sighs;
My wo-worn heart hath still some tears for thee;
Nor will thy shade the tribute sad despise.
Brother, farewell!—Ah, yes!—no voice replies:
But my tears flow—albeit in vain they flow—
For him who at my feet so darkly sleeps;
And Freedom's champion, with the locks of snow,
Now fears the form o'er which he sternly weeps.
An awful gloom upon my spirit creeps.
My ten years' comrade! whither art thou fled?
Thou art not here! Thy lifeless picture keeps
Its place before me, while, almost in dread,
I shrink, yet gaze, and long to share thy bed.

[*He retires to a corner of the dungeon farthest from the corpse, and there continues to gaze upon it in silence.*]

LOVE.

To G. Calvert Holland, M.D., who, by his efforts in favour of Universal Education, is preparing better days for the England of my children, and a brighter futurity for the human race, I inscribe this Poem.

BOOK I.

What marvel, Laura, if thy minstrel shun
The peopled waste, the loneliness of crowds?
I love the streams, that mirror as they run
The voiceless clouds.
The stillness of Almighty Power is here,
And Solitude—the present Deity—
Throned on the hills that meet the bending sphere,
How silently!
O look around thee! On those rocks sublime,
Th' impression of eternal feet is seen!
These mountains are the eldest-born of Time,
Still young and green!
What nobler home, what holier company
For Love and Thought, than forests and the heath,
Where life's Great Cause, in his sublimity,
Dwells lone as Death?
What scene more fit than this, though wild and drear,
With Heav'n, the universal sea, above,
To prompt the song most sweet to lady's ear—
The lay of Love?

Hear'st thou the murmur of the living rill,
That ever seeks the valley, green and still,
Gliding from view, love-listening groves between,
And most melodious when it flows unseen?
What though, at times, the sun in wrath retire,
And o'er its course the clouds dissolve in fire?
Soon bend the skies in brighter beauty fair,
And see, where'er it flows, their image there.
Softly it steals beneath the lucid sky;
So, Love's lone stream steals to eternity.
How the flowers freshen where the waters glide,
And seem to listen to the limpid tide!
So bless'd is he whose life serenely flows,
Reflecting golden clouds, and many a rose.
He hears heav'n's voice in every warbling grove,
And sees in every flower the smile of Love.
Love! eldest Muse! Time heard thine earliest lay
When light through Heaven led forth the new-born day.
The stars, that give no accent to the wind,
Are golden odes and music to the mind;
So, passion's thrill is Nature's minstrelsy;
So, to the young heart, Love is poetry.
God of the soul! illumination, caught
From thy bright glance, is energy to thought;
And song, bereft of thee, is cold and tame,
The bard a cinder, uninstinct with flame.
But when the heart looks through the eyes of Love
On Nature's form, things lifeless breathe and move;—
The dewy forest smiles, dim morning shakes
The rainbow from his plumage, music wakes
The dimpled ripple of the azure wave,
In fiery floods green hills their tresses lave,
And myriad flowers all bright'ning from the dews,
Day's earth-born stars, their golden beams effuse:
Transported passion bids rocks, floods, and skies
Burst into song, while her delighted eyes
To all they see their own rich hues impart;
And the heart's language speaks to every heart.
Love, 'twas my heart that named thee! sweetest word
Here, or in highest Heav'n, pronounced or heard!
Whether by seraph near the throne above,
Or soul-sick maiden in the vernal grove,
Or matron, with her first-born on her knee,
Or, sweeter, lisp'd by rose-lipp'd infancy!
Yes, Love, my heart did name thee! not because
Thy mandate gave the bright-hair'd comet laws;
Nor that thy hand, in good almightiest, showers
The overblooming, fiery-petall'd flowers
Wide o'er the fields of hyacinthine Heav'n;
But that to me thy richest smile hath giv'n
Bliss, tried in pain. So, 'mid my rosy boys,
In joy and grief, I sing thy griefs and joys.
Bless'd is the hearth, when daughters gird the fire,
And sons, that shall be happier than their sire
Who sees them crowd around his evening chair,
While Love and Hope inspire his wordless pray'r.
O from their home paternal may they go,
With little to unlearn, though much to know!
Them may no poison'd tongue, no evil eye
Curse for the virtues that refuse to die;
The generous heart, the independent mind,
Till truth, like falsehood, leaves a sting behind!
May temperance crown their feast, and friendship share!
May pity come, Love's sister spirit, there!
May they shun baseness, as they shun the grave!
May they be frugal, pious, humble, brave!
Sweet peace be their's, the moonlight of the breast,
And occupation, and alternate rest;
And, dear to care and thought, the rural walk!
Their's be no flower that withers on the stalk,

But roses cropp'd, that shall not bloom in vain,
And Hope's blessed sun, that sets to rise again!
Be chaste their nuptial bed, their home be sweet,
Their floor resound the tread of little feet;
Bless'd beyond fear and fate, if bless'd by thee,
And heirs, O Love, of thine eternity!
Young Devotee, whose fond and guileless heart
Feels, for the first time, Love's delicious smart!
Now—while the sun his crimson radiance showers,
And stars the green night of the woods with flowers,
That hung, like rubies, on each trembling thorn,
Outshine the myriad opals of the morn—
Now take thy lonely walk of ecstasy;
The sun is in the west, young Devotee!
Or, wilt thou seek thine idol proud and fair,
To throw thee at her feet and worship there
The might serene of beauty on her throne,
And feel her power almighty o'er thy own?
Then—as a cloud, athwart the desert cast,
Relieves the wretch who tracks the sand aghast—
If but a ringlet tremble on her cheek,
Or, if her lips but move and seem to speak,
Or, evening brighten in her eye divine,
How sweet a pain, young Devotee, is thine!
But deeper transport far, and sweeter pain,
For Love's victorious votaries remain.
O may'st thou ne'er, like hapless Tasso, know
Ambitious Love's excess of maddening wo!
But long, and long thy bride and truth's to be,
May beauty smile or weep in bliss with thee;
Nor live, like sad Miranda, to deplore, [a]
Where savage grandeur crowns some alien shore,
Connubial widowhood in hated arms,
And curse, with every kiss, her fatal charms!
Oh, bless'd, who drinks the bliss that Hymen yields,
And plucks life's roses in his quiet fields!
Though in his absence hours seem lengthened years,
His presence hallows separation's tears.
Oh! clasp'd in dreams, for his delay'd return
Fond arms are stretch'd, and speechless wishes burn!
Love o'er his fever'd soul sheds tears more sweet
Than angel's smiles, when parted angels meet:
To him no fabled paradise is given;
His very sorrows charm, and breathe of heav'n.
And soon the fairest form that walks below
Shall bless the name of parent in her wo;
Soon o'er her babe shall breathe a mother's pray'r,
And kiss its father's living picture there,
While the young stranger on life's dangerous way
Turns with a smile his blue eye to the day.
But where shall poesy fit colours choose
To paint the matron morning sprinkling dews
O'er half-blown flowers, that pay their early breath
In tribute to the Lord of life and death,
Who bids the lucid blush of nature glow
Till angels see another Heaven below,
Dimples the deep with every breeze that blows,
And gives its sweet existence to the rose?
Maternal Love, best type of heavenly bliss!
Thou shew'st the joys of brighter worlds in this,
When sons and daughters rush to thy embrace,
And Love is painted on each rosy face!
E'en in the vale of poverty and gloom,
Thy joys, like heath-flowers on the moorland, bloom,
And o'er thy child of ignorance thy sigh
Is wordless pray'r, and not unheard on high.
But crown'd with knowledge, best Instructress thou!
Tuition smiles seraphic on thy brow.
What though Contempt, with simpering sneer aside,
Deems all thy teaching labour misapplied?
What though around thee move the slaves of gain
Who oft inflict, but seldom pity pain;
Still pointing, as they shake the sapient head,
At talent's rags, and learning's sons half-fed?
Thy children's worth, maturing day by day,
Thy children's glory, shall thy cares repay;
And they shall bless thine age with accents kind,
E'en as his daughter nursed Ferdoosi blind,
When three times thirty years and ten had shed
Illustrious Winter on his honour'd head.
A soldier, Charles shall Wolfe's renown transcend,
Proud to avenge his country, or defend.
John, grave in childhood, on the soul shall shower
The Gospel-dews, with renovating power;
Sublime instruction from his lips shall flow,
And Mercy's antidote for sin and wo.
Matilda's name shall shine, admir'd afar,
In Fame's blue night, a new, and lovely star:
May she not hope for glory's bright caress,
Fair, young, ingenious, and a Britoness?
May she not hope, where all can judge and feel?
Where wealth crowns virtue, genius, and O'Neil?
Where Opie's pages truth and joy impart?
Where Owenson and Edgeworth paint the heart?
Where, crown'd with terror, Radcliffe rears her throne,
A dread Medea, but a guiltless one;
And tragic Baillie stole from Nature's side
The mantle left by Shakspeare, when he died?
But better bliss shall glowing Mary prove,
Bless'd in a faithful husband's fondest love.
Then each sweet grandchild on thy heart shall rise
A new existence, rich in ecstasies;
And, mother's mother! a new name, be given
To thee, a Heav'n to come, and memory's Heav'n.
Peace, like an infant, slumbering at thy feet,
Thy day shall melt into the evening sweet;
And while elysian breezes fan thy breast,
Thou shalt sink gently, with a smile, to rest;
And many a relative, and many a friend,
And many a tear, shall note thy gentle end.
When Cook, a sailor's boy, with aching eye,
Gazed from the deep on oft-climb'd Roseberry, [b]
While, trembling as she listen'd to the blast,
His anxious parent sea-ward wishes cast,
And fervent pray'r was mute, but not suppress'd,
Though Love was resignation in her breast;
Why did'st thou not—thou happiest name of joy!
Bid her cheer'd spirit see that deathless boy
Bear round the globe Britannia's flag unfurl'd,
And from th' abyss unknown call forth a world?
Where death-freed wanderers tread celestial shores,
And silence, in eternal light, adores!
Spirit of Jones! to earth-born Angels tell
What sweet instructress taught her child so well,
What earthly form is likest their's above,
And, in thy teacher, bless Maternal Love!
When Watts' pale mother, o'er her thoughtful child,
In hope and fear alternate wept and smiled,
And bore privation that his mind might feed,
Dare greatest things, and, greatly wise, succeed;—
Though rapture mingled with her bosom's smart,
And sweetest visions tranquillized her heart,
She could not see him give Improvement birth,
And with his vapoury lever lift the earth.
E'en the bright promise in the parent's soul
Mistook and bless'd a portion for the whole;
And Love, for once, a timid prophet, told
Scarce half the worth that truth-taught Time unroll'd.
In Severn's vale, a wan and moonstruck boy
Sought, by the daisy's side, a pensive joy;

Held converse with the sea-birds as they pass'd,
And strange and dire communion with the blast,
And read in sunbeams, and the starry sky,
The golden language of eternity.
Age saw him, and look'd sad; the young men smiled;
And wondering maidens shunn'd his aspect wild.
But He—the ever kind, the ever wise!
Who sees through fate, with omnipresent eyes,
Hid from the mother, while she bless'd her son,
The woes of genius, and of Chatterton.
What child is hopeless in his mother's sight?
Say, then, O thou, whose very tears delight,
Walks there a wretch, displeased, amid thy flowers,
Who, while thy smile illumes life's saddest hours,
With serpent hiss malign thy worth denies,
And views thy transports with disdainful eyes?
There are, sweet power! who blame thy gentle rule,
And call thy hearth of happiness the school
Where manly hearts, by hate coerced in vain,
First learn to like, and then to wear a chain.
Cold, but not wise, a partial task is their's,
To blame the rich soil for the weed it bears.
What power invincible, on earth, in heav'n
Like Love can strive with fate, like Love hath striven?
Thou only spark in man that is divine!
If thine is transport, Stoic strength is thine;
And calmly can'st thou smile on danger's form,
Like rosy summer on the thunder-storm.
Thine is the hand to act, the heart to dare,
The soul to feel, the fortitude to bear,
The breast that softly glows, or bravely bleeds,
The voice that calls to fame, the step that leads;
And time-tried truth and constancy, that prove
He is no wretch who hath no friend but Love.
Too oft hath man, his dream of splendour o'er,
Seen his friend's dog assail him at the door,
But often, too, when hope within him dies,
Love clasps him close, though hope despairs and flies!
So, when o'er Eden waved the fiery brand,
Our exiled parents wander'd, hand in hand,
And left, with many a sigh, th' elysian scene,
A joyless, widow'd bed where bliss had been,
A solitude of beauty, vainly fair,
"A flower unseen, that scents the desert air:"
Love, and sweet tears, for Eden lost suffice;
Though Eden was no longer Paradise;
Oft looking back, they went, but side by side—
The world before them, weeping Love their guide.
Yes, Fortune's faithless wrongs may turn to steel
The flattering foe, that well can feign to feel;
The desperate heart may lean on torture's thorn,
The sun be darkness to the eye forlorn;
All may be hopeless gloom, around, above,
All, save thy quenchless smile, heroic Love!
Of this bear witness, Denbigh, and thou den,
Too oft the torturing home of hapless men,
Where Waller's Angel cheer'd him in the tomb, [c]
And smiled a twilight o'er his dungeon's gloom!
Bear witness, too, ye groves of Tankersley,
And thou, pure rill, whose sky-born melody
Warbles of heav'nly peace! for ye beheld
(When Fanshawe sought, by Cromwell's sword compell'd, [d]
His care-worn form beneath your shades to hide)
The mate of Honour by her husband's side!
She, when the iron pierced his soul, was near,
To bathe his aching fetters with a tear:
And, when her supplication broke his chain,
She kiss'd away the mem'ry of his pain,
And bade him strike, where Druid oaks aspire,
The love-taught Lusian's care-assuaging lyre.
O, sink not then, desponding slave of care!
Arise, be dreadless! why should man despair?
Lo, woman's love can plant the rock with flowers,
Gild Fate's black storm, when big with death it lowers,
Make cowards brave, arm Pity's hand to slay,
And scathe Invasion's hordes in disarray!
Love! when red Battle, o'er the stormy crest
Of free Helvetia, roll'd his eye unbless'd,
Thou heard'st thy sons on God and Freedom call,
Thou saw'st thy sons in Freedom's conflict fall.
The infant Tell, when that sad tale is told,
Lowers, with indignant front, his locks of gold,
Clangs his small drum, with despot-daring hand,
And half assumes his little wooden brand;
Rage, wonder, grief, his guileless heart surprise,
And all the mother swells into his eyes.
Then, when th' horizon flamed—a flag of doom—
When pale affright heard breeze-born horrors boom,
When blazing hamlets spoke of havock near,
And beauty paid her hero with a tear,
What wonder, if the virgin helm'd her head,
Rush'd to the field with thundering volleys red,
And, by her lover's side, a martial form,
Tower'd the Bellona of the battle-storm?
So, when around thy home war's banners fly,
And patriots on the threshold fight and die,
The Matron, then—her dreadless husband slain,
And dead the famish'd child, that lived in vain—
Climbs with Thalestrian port the leaguered wall,
Where death rides sulphury on the whirling ball,
Fires her loud tube, and on the fiends below
Shakes from her widow'd tresses shame and wo.
To scathe with dread th' Oppressor's cheek of flame,
To foil Death's gambler at his favourite game,
To soothe despair, and bid e'en anguish please,
These are thy triumphs, mighty Conqueror, these!
Vaulting Ambition hesitates to meet
Thy powerful glance; War crouches at thy feet.
When troubles rise, when peril's direst form,
Frowning on man, adds darkness to the storm;
Then—while, in spite of shame, the bravest fear—
Affection stands her babes and husband near,
Endures and dares, for him, and them alone,
And, in their danger, quite forgets her own.
When Virtue dies, in pallid Want's embrace
Not friendless, though abandoned by the base;
Then o'er the grave from which all flatterers fly,
Love sheds a tear which kingdoms could not buy.
And—as the April sunbeam melts the snow,
Till peeps the golden flower that slept below—
Thy look can charm the Fiend beneath whose eye
All joys, but thine, and bless'd Religion's, die,
The king of woes, pride-humbling Poverty.

BOOK II.

O faithful Love, by Poverty embraced!
Thy heart is fire, amid a wintry waste;
Thy joys are roses, born on Hecla's brow;
Thy home is Eden, warm amid the snow;
And she, thy mate, when coldest blows the storm,
Clings then most fondly to thy guardian form;
E'en as thy taper gives intensest light,
When o'er thy bow'd roof darkest falls the night.
Oh, if thou e'er hast wrong'd her, if thou e'er
From those mild eyes hast caused one bitter tear
To flow unseen, repent, and sin no more!
For richest gems, compared with her, are poor;
Gold, weigh'd against her heart, is light—is vile;
And when thou sufferest, who shall see her smile?
Sighing, ye wake, and sighing sink to sleep,
And seldom smile, without fresh cause to weep;

(Scarce dry the pebble, by the wave dash'd o'er,
Another comes, to wet it as before ;)
Yet, while in gloom your freezing day declines,
How fair the wintry sunbeam when it shines !
Your foliage, where no summer leaf is seen,
Sweetly embroiders earth's white veil with green ;
And your broad branches, proud of storm-tried strength,
Stretch to the winds in sport their stalwart length,
And calmly wave, beneath the darkest hour,
The ice-born fruit, the frost-defying flower.
Let Luxury, sickening in profusion's chair,
Unwisely pamper his unworthy heir,
And, while he feeds him, blush and tremble too !
But, Love and Labour, blush not, fear not you !
Your children, (splinters from the mountain's side,)
With rugged hands, shall for themselves provide.
Parent of valour, cast away thy fear !
Mother of men, be proud without a tear !
While round your hearth the wo-nursed virtues move,
And all that manliness can ask of Love ;
Remember Hogarth, and abjure despair, (e)
Remember Arkwright, and peasant Clare.
Burns, o'er the plough, sung sweet his wood-notes wild,
And richest SHAKSPEARE was a poor man's child.
Sire, green in age, mild, patient, toil-inured,
Endure thine evils, as thou hast endured.
Behold thy wedded daughter, and rejoice !
Hear hope's sweet accents in a grandchild's voice !
See Freedom's bulwarks in thy sons arise,
And Hampden, Russell, Sidney, in their eyes !
And should some new Napoleon's curse subdue
All hearths but thine, let him behold them too,
And timely shun a deadlier Waterloo !
Northumbrian vales ! ye saw, in silent pride,
The pensive brow of lowly Akenside,
When, poor, yet learn'd, he wander'd young and free,
And felt within the strong divinity.
Scenes of his youth, where first he woo'd the Nine,
His spirit still is with you, vales of Tyne !
As when he breathed, your blue-bell'd paths along,
The soul of Plato into British song.
Born in a lowly hut an infant slept,
Dreamful in sleep, and, sleeping, smiled or wept :
Silent the youth—the man was grave and shy :
His parents loved to watch his wondering eye :
And, lo ! he waved a prophet's hand, and gave,
Where the winds soar, a pathway to the wave !
From hill to hill bade air-hung rivers stride,
And flow through mountains with a conqueror's pride :
O'er grazing herds, lo ! ships suspended sail,
And Brindley's praise hath wings in every gale !
The worm came up to drink the welcome shower ;
The redbreast quaff'd the rain-drop in the bower ;
The flaskering duck through freshen'd lilies swam ;
The bright roach took the fly below the dam ;
Ramp'd the glad colt, and cropp'd the pensile spray ;
No more in dust uprose the sultry way ;
The lark was in the cloud ; the woodbine hung
More sweetly o'er the chaffinch while he sung ;
And the wild rose, from every dripping bush,
Beheld on silvery Sheaf the mirror'd blush ;
When, calmly seated on his pannier'd ass,
Where travellers hear the steel hiss as they pass,
A milkboy, sheltering from the transient storm,
Chalk'd, on the grinder's wall, an infant's form ;
Young Chantrey smiled ; no critic praised or blam'd ;
And golden promise smil'd, and thus exclaimed—

" Go, child of genius ! rich be thine increase ;
Go—be the Phidias of the second Greece !"
Greece ! thou art fallen, by luxury o'erthrown,
Not vanquish'd by the Man of Macedon !
For ever fall'n ! and Sculpture fell with thee.
But from the ranks of British poverty
A glory hath burst forth, and matchless powers
Shall make th' eternal grace of Sculpture our's.
The eternal grace ? Alas ! the date assign'd
To works, call'd deathless, of creative mind,
Is but a speck upon the sea of days ;
And frail man's immortality of praise,
A moment to th' eternity of Time,
That is, and was, and shall be the sublime,
The unbeginning, the unending sea,
Dimensionless as God's infinity !
England, like Greece, shall fall, despoil'd, defaced,
And weep, the Tadmor of the watery waste.
The wave shall mock her lone and manless shore ;
The deep shall know her freighted wealth no more ;
And unborn wanderers, in the future wood
Where London stands, shall ask where London stood ?
As melt the clouds at summer's feet sublime,
The burning forests of noon's fiery clime ;
So, art and power, with freedom, melt away
In long prosperity's unclouded ray.
Let soul-sick minstrels sing of myrtle bowers,
And diadem the brow of Love with flowers,
Matured where earth brings forth the rack and scourge,
And ruthless tortures languid labours urge.
Slaves ! where ye toil for tyrants, Love is not :
Love's noblest temple is the freeman's cot !
What though each blast its humble thatch uptear ?
Bold shall the tyrant be that enters there.
Look up and see, where, throned on alpine snow,
Valour disdains the bondsman's vales below :
So, Love, companion of the wolf, may roam,
And in the desert find a boundless home ;
But will not bow the knee to pomp and pride,
Where slaves of slaves with hate and fear reside.
What are the glories that Oppression throws
Around his vainly-guarded throne of woes ;
The marbles of divinity, and all
That decks pale Freedom's pomp of funeral ?
Let Grandeur's home, o'er subject fields and floods,
Rise, like a mountain clad in wintry woods,
And columns tall, of marble wrought, uphold
The spiry roof, and ceilings coved in gold ;
But better than the palace and the slave
Is Nature's cavern that o'erlooks the wave,
Rock-paved beneath, and granite-arched above,
If Independence sojourn there with Love !
Star of the heart ! O still on Britain smile,
Of old thy chosen, once thy favour'd isle,
And by the nations, envious and unbless'd,
Call'd thine and Freedom's Eden in the west !
Then hymns to Love arose from every glen,
Each British cottage was thy temple then.
But now what Demon blasts thy happiest land,
And bids thine exiled offspring crowd the strand ;
Or pens in festering towns the victim swain,
And sweeps thy cot, thy garden, from the plain ?
Lo ! where the pauper idles in despair,
Thy Eden droops, for blight and dearth are there !
And, like an autumn floweret, lingering late,
Scarce lives a relic of thy happier state—
A wreck of peace and love, with sadness seen,
That faintly tells what England once hath been !
Amid coeval orchards, grey with age,
Screen'd by memorial elms from winter's rage.
Scarce stands a shed, where virtue loves to be,
A hut of self-dependant poverty,

Where want pines proudly, though distress and fear
Stain thy mute votary with too sad a tear;
And yet I feel thine altar still is here—
Here, where thy Goldsmith's too prophetic strain,
'Mid the few ruins that attest thy reign,
Deplored the sinking hind, the desecrated plain.
Alas, sweet Auburn! since thy bard bewail'd
"Thy bowers, by Trade's unfeeling sons assail'd,"
How many a village, sweet like thee, hath seen
The once-bless'd cottage joyless on the green!
Now e'en "the last of all thy harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain,"
Now "e'en that feeble, solitary thing"
Hath ceas'd "to bend above the plashy spring;"
And her fall'n children breathe their curses deep,
Far from that home of which they think and weep.
Where myriad chimneys wrap their dens in shade,
They rob the night to ply their sickly trade,
And weekly come, with subjugated soul,
Degraded, lost, to ask the workhouse dole.
Slow seems the gloomy Angel, slow, to bring
His opiate cold to hopeless suffering;
And, when in death's long sleep their eyes shall close,
Not with their fathers shall their dust repose,
By hoary playmates of their boyhood laid
Where never corse-thief plied his horrid trade:
Not in the village church-yard, lone and green,
Around their graves, shall weeping friends be seen;
But surly haste shall delve their shallow bed,
And hireling hands shall lay them with the dead,
Where chapmen bargain on the letter'd stone,
Or stumble, careless, o'er the frequent bone.
How long, O Love! shall loveless Avarice sow
Despair and sloth, and ask why curses grow?
Or dost thou give thy choicest gifts in vain,
And mock with seeming good the heir of pain?
God! where thy image dwells must sorrow dwell?
Must Famine make thy earth her hopeless hell?
Did thy uplifted axe, Napoleon, find,
In manless deserts, barren as the wind,
Food? or, when black depopulation shed
Hunger o'er Moscow, were Gaul's armies fed?
Why do the clouds cast fatness on the hills?
Why pours the mountain his unfailing rills?
Why teems with flowers the vale—with life the sky?
Why weds with loveliness utility?
Why woos the foodful plain, in blessing bless'd,
The sons of labour to her virgin breast?
Why is the transcript of thy Heav'n so fair,
If man, poor victim! lives but to despair?
O thou, whose brightening wing is plumed with light,
At once that pinion's beauty and its might—
Thou true Prometheus, by whose lore were taught
To fix on adamant the fleeting thought,
Star-ruling science, calculation strong,
The march of letters, and th' array of song!
Twin-born with Liberty, and child of Love,
Wo-conqu'ring Knowledge! when wilt thou remove
Th' opprobium of the earth—the chain'd in soul?
When wilt thou make man's deadliest sickness whole?
Lo! while our "bearers of glad tidings" roam
To farthest lands, we pine in gloom at home!
And still, in thought, I hear one whirlwind past! (f)
Still hurtles in my soul the dying blast,
The echo of a hell of sound, that jarr'd
The ear of Heav'n, as when his angels warr'd!
Terrific drama! and the actors men;
But such may shuddering earth ne'er see again!
Unlike her children, less than fiends or more!
And one, of scarcely human grandeur, bore
World-shaking thunder on his sightless wing; (g)
But, when thy spear assail'd his brandish'd sting,
He waned to half a Cæsar. Him the frown
Of ruin dash'd beneath thy axle down;
Then horror shook him from his deathlike sleep;
Then vengeance cast him o'er the troubled deep;
And, on the winds of retribution hurl'd,
His demon-shadow still appals the world!
When, Knowledge, when will mortals learn thy lore?
They plant thy tree, and water it with gore.
When wilt thou—when thy power almighty prove,
And bind the sons of men in chains of Love?
Rise, hope of nations, and assuage their ills!
This wills thy Teacher—this thy Parent wills.
For this, Love taught thy childhood in her bower,
And bade thee syllable her words of power,
Till brighten'd on thy brow sublimest thought;
And she, thy teacher, wonder'd as she taught.
O rise and reign, bless'd Power, that lov'st to bless;
Queen of all worlds, best name of mightiness!
Thy book of life to Labour's children give:
Let Destitution learn to read, and live;
And Independence, smiling on thy brow,
Sing hymns to Love and Plenty, o'er the plough!
Thy kingdom come! on earth let discord cease;
Come thy long Sabbath of bless'd love and peace!
No more let Famine, from her idle hell,
Unwonted guest, with Love and Labour dwell,
Till Death stares ghastly-wild in living eyes,
And at Pride's bloated feet his feeder dies,
While Luxury, hand in hand with Ruin, moves
To do the Devil's work, and call it Love's.
What whirlwind, in his dread magnificence,
What Samiel blasts, like hopeless indolence?
And man, when active most, and govern'd best,
Hath ills enough, insatiate to molest
His fragile peace—some strong in evil will,
But weak in act; and others arm'd to kill,
Or swift to wound;—Revenge, with venomous eyes;
Distrust, beneath whose frown affection dies;
Scorn, reptile Scorn, that hates the eagle's wing;
Mean Envy's grubs, that stink, and long to sting;
Mischance, Disease, Detraction's coward dart,
And the long silence of the broken heart;
Nor only these. Tradition is the sigh
Of one who hath no hope; and history
Bears—like a river deep, tumultuous, wide—
Gloom, guilt, and wo, on his eternal tide.
Nor need we read of regal wrath and hate,
Troy lost by Love and army-scatt'ring Fate.
The humblest hamlet's annals wake a sigh;
And could yon cot, hoar with antiquity,
Relate what deeds within it have been done,
What hopeless suffering there hath cursed the sun,
The tale might draw down Pride's parched cheek severe,
From Power's hard eye, e'en Pluto's iron tear.

NOTES.

(a) *Nor live, like sad Miranda, to deplore.*

"Charlevoix tells an affecting story of the fate of the garrison of the fort Santi Spiritûs, which, though it has the air of romance, is not incredible. Mangora, Prince of the Timbuez (an Indian nation in the neighbourhood of the fort) becoming enamoured of Lucy Miranda, a Spanish lady, the wife of Sebastian Hurtado, (one of the principal officers of the fort,) in order to obtain possession

of her, laid a plot for the destruction of the garrison. Taking advantage of the absence of Hurtado, who was detached with another officer, named Ruiz Moschera, and fifty soldiers, to collect provisions, he placed four thousand men in a marsh, and went, with thirty others, loaded with refreshments, to the gates of the fort, which were readily opened for their admittance. Lara, the Spanish governor, in token of gratitude, gave them an entertainment; at the close of which, late at night, Mangora giving directions to his attendants to set fire to the magazines of the fort, the four thousand men, at this preconcerted signal, rushed into the massacre. Most of the Spaniards were killed in their sleep. Lara, though wounded, espying the treacherous Prince, made up to him, and ran him through the body, but was intercepted in his flight, and killed. Not a living person was now left in the fort except Miranda, four other women, and as many children, all of whom were tied and brought before Siripa, the brother and successor of Mangora. At the sight of Miranda, he conceived for her the same passion which had proved fatal to his brother. On the return of Hurtado, Siripa ordered him to be tied to a tree, and there shot to death with arrows. Miranda throwing herself at the feet of the tyrant, by her suppliant charms procured her husband's release. The Indian indulged them in a restricted intercourse; but the boundaries being passed, he instantly condemned Miranda to the flames, and Hurtado to the torturing death which he had but lately escaped." —*Holmes.*

([b]) *When Cook, a sailor's boy, with aching eye,*
Gazed from the deep on oft-climb'd Roseberry.

Roseberry-Topping is a mountain near Stockesley in Yorkshire, from the summit of which there is a fine view over Cleveland, of Stockesley, Yarm, Stockton, Darlington, Hartlepool, the Tees, and the Ocean. It is a noted sea-mark.

([c]) *Where Waller's Angel cheer'd him in the tomb—*

"I have been," says Sir William Waller, "in prison frequent. After above three years' imprisonment, and thus changed, as it were, from vessel to vessel, it pleased the Lord to restore me to my poor family. And here let me call to mind how much reason I had to be thankful for the great comfort experienced in the dear partner of my captivity. She came to me disguised in mean apparel, when I groaned in my bonds seven months, thinking it the duty of a wife to risk all things for the satisfaction of her husband. Much difficulty had she in coming, and was frequently on the brink of being discovered; but, at length, over mountains and unknown roads, sometimes with a guide and sometimes with none, she arrived at my prison; and she seemed, when she discovered herself to me, to be like the angel who appeared unto Saint Peter in like circumstances. She did not indeed bid my prison gates fly open, but, by her sweet converse and behaviour, she made those things seem light which were before heavy and scarce to be borne."—*Recollections of Sir William Waller, at the end of the poetry of Anna Matilda.* 12mo, 1788.

([d]) *When Fanshawe sought, by Cromwell's sword compelled—*

"On the 2d September 1651, was fought the battle of Worcester, when the King being missing, and I hearing nothing of your father being dead or alive for three days, it is inexpressible in what affliction I was. I neither ate nor slept, but trembled at every motion I heard, expecting the fatal news, which at last came, that your father was a prisoner."

* * * * * *

"Orders came, to carry my husband to Whitehall, where, in a little room, he was kept prisoner without speech of any, and in expectation of death; and at last he grew so ill, by the cold and hard marches he had undergone, and being pent up in a room close and small, that the scurvy brought him to death's door. During the time of his imprisonment, I failed not, constantly, when the clock struck four in the morning, to go with a dark lanthorn in my hand, all alone and on foot, from my lodgings in Chancery Lane, at my cousin Young's, to Whitehall, by the entry that went out of King Street into the Bowling Green. There I would go under the window, and call him softly. He, excepting the first time, never failed to come at the first call. Thus we talked together; and sometimes I was so wet, that the rain went in at my neck, and out at my heels."

* * * * * *

"In March we went with our three children into Yorkshire. There my husband translated the Lusiad of Camoens. We lived a harmless country life, and our house and park of Tankersley are very pleasant and good."

* * * * * *

"At Wallingford House the office was kept, at which they gave passes for going abroad. In order to follow my husband, I went there to get one, dressed in as plain a way and speech as I could devise, (leaving my maid at the gate, who was a much finer gentlewoman than myself.) With as ill a mien and tone as I could, I told a fellow that I found in the office, that I desired a pass for Paris to go to my husband. Woman, says he, what is your husband, and what is your name? Sir, said I, with many curtsies, he is a merchant, and his name is Harrison. Well, replied he, it will cost you a crown. That is a large sum for me, said I; but pray put in my man, my maid, and three children; all which he immediately did, telling me thata Malignant would give him five pounds for such a pass. I thanked him kindly, and went away to my lodgings, where, with a pen, I made the great H into FF, the two R's into W, the I into S, the H and O into A, and the N into W, so completely, that no one could find out the change. With all speed I hired a barge, and that night, at six o'clock, I was at Gravesend; where the searcher came, who knowing me, demanded my pass, which they were obliged to keep for their discharge."

* * * * * *

"On the 15th June 1666, my husband was taken sick with a disorder like unto an ague, but it turned out to be a malignant inward fever, of which he lay until the 26th of the same month."——"O all powerful Lord God! look down from heaven upon me, the most distressed wretch upon earth! see my soul divided, my glory and my guide taken from me, and in him all my comfort in this life! Have pity upon me, O Lord! and speak peace to my disquieted soul, which, without thy support, cannot sustain itself! Behold me, O Lord! with five children, a distressed family, without friends, without counsel, out of my own country, without any means of returning with my wretched family to my own country, now at war with most parts of Christendon!"—*MS. Memoirs of Lady Fanshawe.*

([e]) *Remember Hogarth, and abjure despair.*

This great painter was bound apprentice to an engraver of arms and silver plate, in 1698. It was not until 1720 that he was enabled to set up in business for himself; and his first employment was to engrave coats of arms and shop bills.

([f]) *And still, in thought, I hear one whirlwind past.*

The French Revolution.

([g]) *And one, of scarcely human grandeur, bore*
World-shaking thunder on his sightless wing;

Napoleon, who, when these lines were written, was a prisoner at St Helena.

THE LETTER.

A tale of tears I dedicate
To him—the wise, the good, the great—
Who wrote, while raged the factious storm,
Our Bill of long-delay'd Reform.
Oh, if my song, when I am dust,
May hope to please the meek and just,
Whoe'er thou art that lov'st true fame,
From this page tear not LAMBTON'S name.

Where is the youth, for deeds immortal born, (1)
Who loved to whisper to th' embattled corn,
And cluster'd woodbines, breathing o'er the stream,
Endymion's beauteous passion for a dream?
Why did he drop the harp from fingers cold,
And sleep so soon with demigods of old?
Oh, who so well could sing Love's joys and pains?
He lived in melody, as if his veins
Pour'd music: from his lips came words of fire,
The voice of Greece, the tones of Homer's lyre.
But me no guide, through academic shade,
Led to the cell where glory's spoils are laid;
And shall my hand, for joyous task unmeet,
Presume, O Love! to scatter at thy feet,
Instead of roses, nightshade; and instead
Of fragrance, chaplets gather'd from the dead?
Self-taught and ill, my notes uncouth I try,
And chant my rugged English ruggedly,
To gloomy themes. Yet, sick with hope deferr'd,
I hear a voice, though mournful, proudly heard;
And I have planted on my destined tomb
A pensive tree, that bends in storm and gloom,
Unseen, unknown. Oh, when shall it repair,
In lonely moonlight, beautiful and sweet,
The weeping bough? and flourish green and fair,
Where slighted maidens mourn, and ghosts of lovers meet?
Wild as the chainless air, or bird that wings
The blue above the clouds, and soaring sings
Blythe welcome to the dewy, fragrant morn,
Young Anna dwelt with health, the mountain-born,
Where, murmuring with the moorland bee, the Dearn
Leaps from his well, through heath and plumy fern,
Till, pleased with richer blossoms in the vale,
He checks his wave, and hears the milkmaid's tale.
There, light of heart, nor lonely, nor unseen,
She walk'd and sung, and talk'd and laugh'd between,
Paying, in raptures from her guileless breast,
The soul-felt tribute which pleased Heav'n likes best;
Or paused, on broomy banks to sit or kneel,
While hedge-side bluebells died beneath her heel.
Her brow, where gentlest beauty held high state,
Was vein-inlaid with azure, delicate
As tenderest leaf of shaded columbine
That bends beneath the love-sick eglantine;
And, oh, she was the meekest maid of all
That ever stoop'd o'er alpine waterfall,
Or look'd up to the hills from valleys sweet,
Like Nature's primrose, dropp'd at Bretland's feet.
She lov'd, with virgin-love, a stately swain:
Unhappy passion! though Charles loved again.
Fresh was his cheek, as evening's flowers, that furl'd
Their banners in the sun; his locks outcurl'd
The finger'd hyacinth, outshone the down
On youngest morning's cheek, when, newly blown,
The maiden violet meekly views the south,
While the rich wallflower, in its early growth,
Prepares deep amber, for th' expecting eye
That sees in fading flowers eternity.
She wedded, high in hope and passion strong;
Unhappy marriage! for Charles loved not long;
And, at the altar, dark she stood in light;
Heav'n's swift fire there bereft her eyes of sight.
E'en as she turn'd preparing to withdraw,
Burst flash and crash, in overwhelming awe;
And pale she stood, with sightless eyes uprais'd;
And pale the bridegroom wax'd, as mute he gaz'd;
And from the holy temple, sadly led,
A mourning bride she mov'd, with languish'd head,
To weep, benighted. The moon's gentle ray
Shone not to her, and, unperceived, the day
Died into darkness. But, with Love's soft speech,
And tones that knew the answering heart to reach,
Charles fondly strove her sorrow to beguile,
And drooping blindness slowly learn'd to smile.
Time eased her bosom of its hopeless sighs,
Till joy, at length, revisited her eyes;
But they, doom'd ever "objectless to roll,"
Could bring no more the blue hills to the soul,
Or, with night's shadows, bid all gloom depart,
And paint life's morning faces on the heart.
Sad, then, it was, to see a form so fair,
In tears resign'd, though dark, not in despair.
Still on his bosom she could lean and weep,
And feign a dream of eyelids closed in sleep;
Still, when with him she walk'd, at eve or morn,
She could inhale the odours of the thorn;
And while she hung so helpless on his arm,
Dependence gave his words a double charm:
They fell like dew o'er violets on her ear,
Or like offended Love's forgiving tear
On man's warm breast. Yet, by the plaining rill,
The thought would rise, that flowers on every hill
Were beautiful to every eye but hers;
That broom and hawthorn, and the armed furze,
Bloom'd, vainly fair, beneath the sapphire sky.
Still wav'd the birch in memory's happy eye;
Yet, made by vain regret more sadly sweet,
The hours return'd, when oft, with naked feet
And bare plung'd arm, the trout or loach she took,
Where stones upturn'd perturb'd the shallow brook;
Or, 'mid her sister Naiades of the dale,
Held forth the lizard by his golden tail
In childish wonder; and an envious pang
Assail'd her weakness, if the echoes rang
With "Holiday!" proclaim'd in joyous cries;
And little boys and girls, with upturn'd eyes,
Came whispering round her. But that selfish pain
Humbled its victim: soon she sought again
For joy in sorrow. True, she could not see
The wingless squirrel frisk from tree to tree,
The wren from twig to twig; but she could hear
The Tartar cuckoo chase his vernal year,
The pewet wail, the starting redbreast sing,
And e'en the flutter of the warbler's wing,
When the bough bent beneath his sudden flight—
Though blind, not lonely in her changeless night;
Then would she chide sad thoughts; and o'er her cheek
A smile would steal, so gentle and so meek,
And her blue orbs, though rolling sightless, gleam'd
With such mild splendour, that, almost, she seem'd
In love with darkness, like the insect things
That hide the gorgeous ruby of their wings
In emerald gloom, beneath the greenwood tree,
And sleep, shade-loving hyacinth, with thee!
Yet would she tremble in her fearful joy,
As wan flowers droop when April frosts annoy.
She felt a sad foreboding in her heart,
A dread that, oft dismiss'd, would not depart.
Blind and beloved, she smiled through tears, resigned;
But, ah! she fear'd to be despised and blind,

Yet scarce knew why! Alas, her fears were true!
Soon, scorn'd, she droop'd—O say not hated too!
How oft doth Baseness to his victim say,
"Why should the wretch receive, who cannot pay?"
Ne'er had Ingratitude his plea to seek,
And cowards love to trample on the weak;
And still the helpless, when most aid they need,
Die of neglect, (sad ill!) and slowly bleed,
By drop and drop, in silent, lone distress,
Till the heart swoons into forgetfulness!
More seldom, day by day, Charles sooth'd her wo;
He came, she dared not own, in haste to go;
But she would sigh, and, with suspended breath,
Hear tones that were to her a dirge of death;
Then, while they struck her heart and soul with blight,
Try to believe she had not heard aright.
Few were his questions, harsh were his replies,
And deeply in his heart he cursed her sighs,
And called his guilt misfortune. She became
A thing unmark'd—though seen, o'erlooked: her name
Ceased to be heard—she vanish'd. Who inquired
If she were dead or living? Undesired
Came such inquiries; and one answer brief
Met them, half-utter'd. Hopeless, in her grief,
She sate in some dark corner, lone; and there,
With restless lips, she mutter'd ceaseless pray'r,
Or sigh'd, unheard, "What will become of me?"
But menial wrath, with vile indignity,
And vulgar curses on her helpless head,
Soon drove her to her unpartaken bed,
Through the long night of nights and days to weep,
Or start from slumb'rous dreams, but not to sleep.
Yet was her trust in God unshaken still,
And she endured, with meek-submitted will,
Her heavy sorrows; nor of that worst pain,
Love unrequited, did she once complain.
Poor, sightless, trampled worm! for him she pray'd
Who bade her droop, with none to soothe or aid;
Her broken heart, already, quite forgave
Him whose stern coldness had prepared her grave;
And Charles, by dying Anna unreproved,
When most unworthy, seem'd the most beloved!
He, heartless wretch, and weak as base, made haste
Her bridal portion and his wealth to waste;
And sullenly, when all was gone, assumed
Th' equestrian sword, and helmet sable-plumed.
Strong blew the gale that o'er the heaving main
Bore him to glory and embattled Spain;
Where seldom thought he, 'mid conflicting arms,
Of hapless Anna's sad, deserted charms.
She to that house where want is fed by scorn,
Too weak to walk, by hireling hands was borne;
And there she found, with pain her couch to tend,
A home, like that she left, without a friend.
There, hourly dying, she forgot her wo,
And smiled, with cheek of fire and lip of snow,
On visions of the past. They, sad no more,
Sooth'd her lone heart. Seem'd lovelier than of yore
Her buried joys; and memory loved to gaze
On their pale sleep. She thought of other days,
When, with her Charles, (for still she called him her's,)
By Broad-Oak's ice-cold rill, or Gunthwaite's firs,
Through Cawthorne's bowers, or High-bridge wood she stray'd,
Lost in her love, a happy, trusting maid,
Where—while the jay, with freedom's pinion, shook
The bind-weeds' blush-ting'd bells into the brook—
Thrush answering thrush, piped sweet in fountain'd dell,
And she could see the birds that sung so well.

Meantime, dire fields were fought, and tidings came
That the scathed eagle fled on wings of shame:
Fight follow'd fight; she listened fearfully
To every tale of death and victory;
And oft and oft, all wan, she ask'd who fell,
Dreading to hear a name beloved too well.
Murmurs at length, then voices reach'd her bed;
There was a letter from her Charles, they said.
For the last time, like one risen from the tomb,
She raised her feeble form: a transient bloom
Flush'd her fall'n cheek: with intermitting breath
She bent toward the messengers of death,
As shipwreck'd seamen listen t'wards the land.
She held, stretch'd forth, her agitated hand,
Expecting, not believing, propp'd in bed
On one lean arm, but less in hope than dread;
With feeble shriek, she fell, and tried to rise:
And strain'd the letter to her sightless eyes,
And kissed it o'er and o'er. But when she heard
The written words, she lay like death, nor stirr'd,
Gray tress, or wasted limb. "He told of flocks
With fleeces fine, and goatherds of the rocks,
And Spain's fandango, and the soft guitar,
That sounds o'er treeless wastes to love's bright star,
Calling the hind when day's warm task is done,
To meet the dark-eyed daughters of the sun.
He told of bayonets blood-incarnadin'd,
Of distant battles booming on the wind,
Of foodless marches, and the all-day fight,
And horrid rest among the dead at night.
Last named he servile servants of base ends,
But call'd by him his dear and absent friends;"
For they had pamper'd oft his mind diseased,
Fed on his riot, and with poison pleased.
And was this all? was there no postscript?—No:
Named he not that dark flower inscribed with wo?
Stern manhood, break thy sword, and blush for shame;
He did not even write his Anna's name!
With harrow'd heart that could be still and bleed,
She listen'd when the reader ceased to read.
In silent strength grief tore her soul's deep chords:
Oh, what had wrongs like her's to do with words?
And all who saw her wept at what they saw,
While shook convulsively her under jaw; (k)
But when that quivering jaw was fix'd, she slept,
Serenely pale, while all around her wept.
She slept—she sleeps; but light shall yet arise,
Th' eternal day-spring, on her sightless eyes;
And Mercy yet may purify with pain
That wretch beloved, and bid them meet again!
He, when the trump of war had blown its last,
Sigh'd and look'd back, repentant, on the past.
In pale inaction, languid, he declined,
And with the body sympathized the mind.
Long-slumbering feeling waked, and waked to wo,
Stung by remorse, the never-flattering foe,
That triumph'd o'er his maim'd and toil-worn frame,
As o'er the storm-struck ash the conquering flame.
He thought of Anna, and his tears ran o'er—
He thought of home, resolved to sin no more.
So the poor Hebrew, long content to roam,
The homeless wanderer, seeks at last a home;
Quits the tall bark, and treads the hallow'd strand,
His aged consort leaning on his hand,
Sedately glad, though tears bedim his eye,
To lay his bones where Abraham's ashes lie.
He climb'd the homeward ship, and blamed the wind,
And blam'd the waves, that seem'd to lag behind
The bounding stern; till England, like a cloud,
Dawn'd on the sight, where Heaven to ocean bow'd.
He leap'd to land; and, wing'd o'er Snowgate's fern,
Beheld again the valley of the Dearn.

Cragg'd Hartley's broom, and Breton's shades below,
And Clayton's cottage-smoke ascending slow.
Down, down he hastened, pleased almost to pain,
And felt as if become a boy again.
Then fled the dream. Beside her cottage-door,
Remember'd well for pranks play'd there of yore,
He met a woman, lame and bent, whose breast
Had pillow'd Anna's infant cares to rest—
One who had taught him many a childish game.
But when he paused, and ask'd that aged dame,
In tones that told the sudden dread he felt,
Not if his Anna lived, but where she dwelt,
Back shrank the crone, as from a thing abhorred;
Then slowly forth she drew, without a word,
The brooch which, erst, his ill-starr'd Anna wore;
And, with a look that pierced him to the core,
Placed in his hand (and turn'd abrupt away)
A lock of faded hair, too early grey!

NOTES.

(i) *Where is the youth, for deeds immortal born?*

John Keats, author of Endymion, who died at Rome, aged 25.

(k) *While shook convulsively her under jaw.*

The involuntary motion of the under jaw is said to be the last expression of human agony. When the feelings are too painful for utterance—when torture is too exquisite to be endured—the under jaw quivers for a moment, and all is still. This representation, I may be told, by the admirers of commonplace, is unfit for the purposes of poetry. How can they know that, if, to them, poetry itself does not exist? To represent the extreme of mental agony, by its most expressive effect, can never be unpoetical. Most certainly, such vulgarities are not to be found in genteel poetics; but, if unsophisticated nature is no longer to be endured, why not obtain at once a law for the appointment of a sort of literary castrator, or Parnassian Malthus, who may prevent, by an effectual operation, (whenever poverty and merit are identical,) the procreation of plebeian genius? Pedantic insignificance would then no longer be laughed to scorn by cobbler-poets and inspired ploughman.

THEY MET AGAIN.

To the Man of Sheffield and our hearts—Thomas Asline Ward, Esquire—I inscribe this Poem.

BOOK I.

INTRODUCTION.

Sad Laura! dost thou mourn with me
The year's autumnal spring?
Sigh'st thou this second wreath to see
Of woodbines blossoming?
So late, so pale, with scentless breath—
Like lingering Hope, that smiles in death;
And, e'en when life is o'er,
Leaves on Misfortune's ice-cold face
The sweetness of its last embrace
To fade, and be no more.
Lo! June's divested primrose sports
A silken coif again;
And, like late-smiling sickness, courts
The coy morn, but in vain!
Lo! half the elm's rich robe is gone!
The ash, a living skeleton,
Deplores his yellow hair!
Yet, while the maple bows her head,
In mournful honours fair,
And while the beach-leaf rustles red,
Methinks the armed gorse appears
More golden, than when May
Left April dying in her tears,
Beneath the plumy spray;
And, for her lover's triumph won,
Danced with her blue-bell anklets on,
And bless'd his burning eye.
Then, Laura, come, and hear the thrush,
O'er Autumn's gorse, from budding bush,
Pour vernal melody!
Come! and, beneath the fresh green-leaf
That mocks the aged year,
Thy bard, who loves the joy of grief,
Shall weave a chaplet here;
Not pluck'd from Summer's wither'd bowers,
Not form'd of Autumn's hopeless flowers—
Yet sad and wan as they:
Here, still some flowers of Eden blow;
But, deadly pale, and stained with wo,
Like guilt they shun the day;
While Folly treads beneath his feet
The daisy of the vale;
Love's rose, though sick at heart, is sweet—
Joy's leaf is fair, though pale;
And worth admires, resign'd and meek,
The tear-drop on the violet's cheek,
And hope shall death survive;
But, like the gorse, all thorns and gold,
Pride bids the sickening sun behold
How blushing virtues thrive!

Oft, Laura, have we seen (while dewy Spring
Bent to the stockdove's plaintive murmuring
O'er shaded flowers) the lone, wild apple-tree,
With every bough carnation'd pallidly,
In some bright glade, exposed to morning's breeze
Some verdant isle, amid a sea of trees.
It seem'd to live on Heaven's own sweets, and cal
The wanton winds to kiss its blossoms all.
But soon, like dewdrops in the brightening sun,
It's fragrant soul exhaled—soon, one by one,
Its petals, faded into whiteness, died;
And, sweet in ruin, lay on Canklow's side—
The snow of June. And thus, when Time began
His deedful race, the young enthusiast, man,
In first intensest passion bless'd, could see,
Where all was beauty, nought so fair as he;
But from his cheek sin chased th' elysian glow,
And turn'd the brightest hues of love to wo.
O Sin! what havoc hast thou wrought on earth!
To what abortions has thy womb giv'n birth!
When first thy victim, man, conversed with pain,
Love's purest spirit soared to God again,
And murmurs issued from the bowers of bliss;
But, when thy treachery poison'd in a kiss,
Hell raised his hands, and mock'd the throne
sublime;
Hell scarce believed th' unutterable crime;
Heaven's brightness faded; and, with sadden'd eye,
The blushing angels sigh'd—"Adultery!"
In yonder glen, beneath the aspin lone,
A matron sleeps, without memorial stone;
And children trip unconscious o'er her grave,
Where, through the long grass, steals the lucid wave.
When earth was dark with fear, and, lost and seen,
The high moon glanced the hurried clouds between,
Like some blood-guilty wretch, who, self-exiled,
Wakes in the dead of night with anguish wild,
And, o'er the tree-tops waving to and fro,
Looks on the hopeless sea that moans below;

Then stole she from her faithless husband's side,
Sought Don's dark margin, sobbed a prayer and died.
He waked not, though a hand unearthly drew
The curtains of his bed, and to the hue
Of ashes changed his cheek. With open eyes,
He slumber'd still; but speechless agonies
Wrought on his face convulsed his heart's despair,
And terror smote his damp, uplifted hair.
His spirit felt a spirit's strong control,
An injured spirit whispered to his soul—
"No worm slinks down when I approach,
No night-bird stints his ditty;
Yet will I mourn thee, though unheard,
For now my love is pity.
Again I'll hear thee talk of truth,
When Rother's rose is sweetest;
Again I'll meet thee, perjured one,
When thou thy new love meetest.
While stars in silence watch my dust,
I'll sigh, where last ye parted,
O'er her who soon shall droop, like me,
Thy victim, broken-hearted.
And in that hour, to love so dear,
The stillest and the fleetest,
Unfelt I'll kiss my rival's cheek,
When Rother's rose is sweetest."
O thou, whose wings o'er-arch the flood of years,
That rolling, stain'd with crimes, and mix'd with tears,
Whelms in his gulfs each unimmortal form;
Spirit of Brightness! proud to span the storm!
Thy word, O Love! bade light and beauty be,
And Chaos had no form, till touch'd by thee!
Though call'd of old the god of serpent wiles,
Thou source of sweetest, bitterest tears and smiles,
Thy voice endears to man the humblest home;
Fair is the desert, if with love we roam.
Where barks the fox, by golden broom o'erhung,
Where coos the fern-fowl o'er her cowering young,
Thee gloomiest rocks acclaim, with greeting stern,
To thee the uplands bow their feathery fern:
Shaking the dewdrop from his raptured wings,
The waking thrush salutes his mate, and sings;
With amorous lays the glad lark climbs the sky,
And Heaven to earth pours down his melody.
But in thy name when erring mortals sin,
A plague, a cancer, blackens all within,
Till life groans loud his hopeless load beneath,
And the soul darkens into worse than death.
Then Love's meek question meets with no reply,
Save the fierce glance in hatred's sullen eye:
Sad is the day, and sleepless is the night,
And the rose poisons like the aconite.
Earth's verdant mantle is become a shroud;
Sweet Eden's blushes vanish from the cloud;
The rural walk, that pleased when life was new,
Where pendant woodbines grow, as erst they grew,
Can please no more; the mountain air is dead;
And Nature is a book no longer redd.
Suspicion, scorn, contention, treachery come,
And all the fiends that make a hell of home.
Sold to the Furies, ever glad to buy,
Perchance lost man makes haste to kill and die,
Uplifts th' assassin's dagger, and lays low
His idol, once adored, though hated now.
Then Horror's harpy hand, and gorgon scowl,
Rend the distracted tresses of his soul.
He hears sad voices in the silent air;
Heaven seems a marble roof, that spurns his prayer.
Oh, for oblivion, he would barter heaven!
And self-forgotten need he be forgiven?
In thought he sees the midnight stake, the tomb
Delved by the highway-side, in starless gloom,
And the swift bullet flash'd into the brain;
Or robed Justice and her awful train;
The fetter'd limb—the dungeon's agonies,
The scaffold—and the thousand thousand eyes,
All fix'd on him, whose head despair hath bow'd,
Whose heart is all alone in all that crowd;
And like a hooted traitor, wild with fears,
Who sheds from eyeless sockets blood for tears,
While, raining curses on his guilty head,
The rabble shout him to his death of dread;
Chain'd through the soul, he moves, in anguish blind,
And drags remembrance and remorse behind.
Sad as the marble forms on frailty's tomb,
The few surviving flowers of Eden bloom;
And must the serpent, Falsehood, hide, beneath
Their petals dim, the fang whose touch is death?
Hence to the fiends, thou glistering, fatal Asp!
By the long transport of thy parting clasp,
Then most adored, when falsest fear'd or found,
By thy dear coils around the true heart wound!
By suffering weakness, punish'd for thy guilt,
By all the blood which thou hast damn'd or spilt!
And, by thy victims, who implore thy stay!
False Asp, that poisonest Love! away—away!
Hence, serpent, to the fiends! or darkling, rave
In Bothwell's form, o'er Mary Stuart's grave!
Shed o'er her dust thy tears of blood and fire,
And in repentant agonies, expire!
So shall distrust from Love's elysium fly,
So, the worst fever of the soul shall die,
With all the woes that Herod's ghost could tell,
And Mariamne—lov'd, alas! too well!
But doom'd with Time to perish, yet shalt thou
Wrinkle with many a snaky fold his brow.
Though from his snowy pinions, never dry,
He hourly shakes the tears of poesy,
While wo shall weep, his wings are shook in vain,
And every plume must wear its pearl of pain.
To bards unborn thy deeds shall furnish themes
More sad than death, more dire than murder's dreams.
No fancied Muse do I invoke to aid
The song that tells of trusting truth betray'd;
Be thou, my Muse, thou darkest name of wo,
Thou saddest of realities below,
Love!—But I call'd not thee, thou Boy of guile,
Cruel, though fair, that joy'st to sting and smile!
Sly urchin, wing'd and arm'd, too, like the bee,
And tressed with living gold—I call'd not thee!
But thee, sweet profligate, who gavest all—
Peace, earth, and Heav'n—for poison'd fire and gall!
Thee, thee, thou weeping Magdalene, I call!
Alas! o'er thee hath rush'd th' avenging blast;
Through thee the arrows of the grave have pass'd!
Avaunt! thou palest daughter of Despair!
If thou art Love, what form doth Horror wear?
Yet stay! I know thee: in thy faded eye
The light of beauty lingers—soon to die:
Known by the worm that feedeth on the heart,
Stay, guilty Magdalene! we must not part
Till I have told this saddest tale of thine,
And steeped in tears each slow, complaining line.
For what is sinful passion, but the lamp
That gilds the vapours of a dungeon damp,
And cheers the gloom awhile, with fatal light,
Only to leave at last a deeper night,
And make the darkness horror? Yet for this,
This shadowy glimmering of a troubled bliss,
Insensate man, peace, joy, and hope foregoes;
Reckless, he plunges into cureless woes,
Buys fleeting pleasure with enduring pain,
And, drunk with poison, weeps to drink again.

BOOK II.

How, in this wild night, fares the malcontent?
Beneath what pine, by bolt and whirlwind rent,

Seeks he to shelter his devoted form?
Or, on what rock does he contemn the storm,
And shrink from human faces? Cromwell dead,
And Charles restored, to northern isles he fled,
And vainly hoped (a cavern'd wolf) to dwell,
Where reigns the monarch eagle o'er the dell,
In hideous safety. But the billows wide
Yearn to divulge the restless wretch they hide;
And ocean doth but mock him with the roar
Of waves cast high between him and the shore
Of verdant England. Wander where he will,
Proclaimed a traitor, dogg'd and hunted still,
Swift comes the end, a struggle and a groan,
Death by the hangman's hand, or by his own.
There is a cavern midway in the rock
That bears, unmoved, the wave's eternal shock;
'Tis called the Pirate's Den: gigantic stones
Hide the dark entrance; and above them groans,
In every blast, a time-defying-tree,
Twin-brother of the crag. Sublimity,
Lean'd on his arm, beneath it sits, and sees
The bay of shipwreck, where the woful breeze
Murmurs, prophetic of the seaman's knell,
And screams the petrel o'er the hollow swell.
Full many a shrub, sequestered, blooms around;
The cluster'd Loveage decks the rugged ground;
And o'er the rustic carpet, wrought in flowers,
The osprey's wing a snow of blossom showers.
It is a scene so lonely and so fair—
The winds, enamour'd, love to loiter there,
Stoop to salute the sea-pink, as they pass,
And coldly kiss the ever-waving grass.
The roof within, Cathedral-like, ascends
Sublimely arch'd and vaulted high, and bends
O'er pillars vast its sparry curtains grand,
Whose gems unnumber'd shine on every hand
Bright as the plumage of a seraph's wing:
Behold a palace meet for Ocean's King!
But he who lies in troubled sleep beside
The central fire, that casts its radiance wide,
Making with darkness and reflected light
A starry roof, and imitated night,
Most awful in its grandeur—What is he?
What slumbering wretch, escaped the stormy sea,
Who, when his comrades sank to rise no more,
Sent his wild laugh th' affrighted billows o'er?
What mortal slave of sorrow, love, or hate,
Cast on the strand alive to execrate
The storm that was not fatal, and the wave
That did not make the howling foam his grave?
'Tis Moreland, passion's victim from his birth,
Who, like the murderer Cain, hath roam'd the earth.
He, self-deceived, deems man a dungeon'd slave,
While Fate, the gaoler, hears the captive rave;
Smiling to see him roll his eyes in vain,
And grind his teeth, and shake th' insulting chain;
And writhe in fury, like a self-stung snake,
And stamp upon his tombstone but to wake
The echoes of his prison-house of wo.
Victim of passion! hast thou found it so?
Evil must come of evil; and, too late,
Thou call'st the fruit of crime and folly, "Fate."
Sleep, but not rest! Lo! o'er his features spread
An earthly darkness grows; and pallid dread
Smites every lock and every limb amain.
His bristling hair is damp with fear and pain;
And while without the deepening thunders roll,
He seems to hear the tempest in his soul.
O God! 'tis dreadful! Nature's self doth quake
As though her final hour were come; and shake
E'en like the felon, whom th' offended laws
Have doom'd to die. And now the soundless pause
Locks the suspended soul in icy fear,
While Conscience whispers, "God, thy hand is here."
Again the billows are conflicting light:
The evil Angels have a dance to-night,
That shakes the centre! O'er the booming bay
Again the sound, re-echoing, dies away;
And still that sleeper trembles! In his dreams
Sees he the flaming storm that wildly gleams
O'er ocean's wildness? Wretch! no common wo
Hath stamped the curse of Cain upon thy brow.
Hark! in those horrid accents shrieked Despair!
He rises:—Hath the lightning singed his hair?
Lo! from the ground he leaps in pale surprise,
And veils, with lifted hands, his dazzled eyes;
And now he starts to find himself alone!
The hideous phantoms of his sleep are gone:
In low and interrupted words he speaks
His troubled thoughts; and to the wave that breaks
Heard in the pauses of the storm below,
Mutters his guilt and recollected wo.
"Again I am alone. Long have I been
Alone in crowds, and alien to the scene
Where the world's bustling minions shouldered me,
Outliving joy and hope itself, to be
My own tormentor; and in vain to curse
The heart's blank solitude—a hell far worse
Than that which bigots fear. I have endured,
I still endure—though not in hope; immured,
In dark reflection, scowling on the past,
Fearing the future; and, if man is cast
Like a frail weed upon the waters wide,
Rising and falling with the faithless tide,
Life is endurance. Best is he who sinks,
And sinks at once. The humble floweret shrinks,
And dies uprooted when the gloomy hour
Holds converse with the storm. But, cursed with power,
Th' etersial pine, coeval with his rocks,
In gloomy stateliness triumphant, mocks
Heaven's baffled wing; yet stands, with tresses rent,
Tremendous, undesired, a monument
Of vengeance! O'er calamity and crime,
O'er feeling victor, I arose sublime
And tranquil, though terrific. Now I roam
Where pirates lurk, making the sea-birds' home
My alpine fortress, and the blast my page.
To me the deep pays tribute in his rage.
Me, on his rocks impregnable, the Hern
Beholds in dread amaze; and from the fern
Looks forth th' astonished fox with fading eyes,
Yells o'er the cliffs, and, wing'd with terror, flies.
"Yet courage here avails, and everywhere,
And all things may be vanquished, but despair;
For, though 'tis vain to fly from certain doom,
There is a Power which cannot be o'ercome—
The dreadless heart that *will* not. Black and vast
Let vengeance ride upon the rabid blast;
Let the storm smite his hands together; loud
The fiery bolt may thunder from the cloud—
'But not for ever!' Hope exclaims to Fear:
'When night's cold cheek is coldest, morn is near;
Beneath her heavy wind and pelting rain,
Low droops the flower that yet shall smile again;
And while the coward trembles in dismay,
The brave look eastward, and behold 'tis day!'
"But I shall hear Hope's angel voice no more:
Sternly I bear, as valour ever bore,
The evil that admits no cure; and scorn
All-shunned complaint. Hope saw Duration born,
And never should desert him till he dies;
But, falsely called the wretches' friend, she flies
When man is doom'd with cureless ills to cope;
All *but* the wretched have a friend in Hope.
Yet while she smiles on Nature's common wo,
And plants the storm with flowers that sometimes blow,

Why should I rave, though here they will not grow ?
Alike averse to murmur and to weep,
Still in despite of thunder, I can sleep,
Though rest is for the happy. Come what may,
The past is past, nor will the future stay,
Though man, or fiend, or god obstruct her way.
" I wore my youth in dreams on Pleasure's breast;
My sleep was sinful, and I woke unbless'd :
Most wretched, and deserving so to be,
I darkly suffer, but not sullenly.
I have rejoiced and sorrowed ; I have proved
Th' extremes of fate, 'have loved, and been beloved.'
What fallen angel not without a tear,
And piteous wafture of that hand most dear,
And frantic locks, and looks where love yet lives,
Smiles on my soul, and pities and forgives,
Even while she mourns the hour when first she fell
To guilt and shame ? I know thee, wrong'd one, well !
Cursed be the tongue that utters ill of thee !
I found thee fond as fair : and I will be
Still faithful to thy memory, and disdain
The lying penitence of fear and pain.
Ye woodbine bowers, where oft, with throbbing heart,
We met in ecstasy, in tears to part !
Oh, woods of Darnal ! ye no more shall see
The matron tall who loved your shades for me ;
Love-listening Rother, thou wilt hear no more
Her guilty whisper on thy silent shore !
As when she trembled, hung her head, and wept,
Sweet as the flower on which the moon-beam slept,
Wan as the snow-white rose in Catliffe's vale,
But not, like it, in stainless meekness pale.
Scenes of my youth ! 'tis sadly sweet to look
Back on your paths, and read, as in a book,
Where painting's magic brings the past to view,
A witching story, mournful and too true ;
A tale of other times, when life was young,
And passion's heavenly harp was newly strung.
" Yet deeds on memory's faithful tablet live
Which man cannot forget, nor God forgive.
Still to my soul returns the hour deplored
When I became a traitor, fear'd, abhorr'd,
And fiercely fought, and fought against the throne,
By gloomy, envious malice urged alone.
No love of freedom fired my stormy breast : -
I deem'd the patriot half a fool at best.
I scorn'd his shallow hope, his honest zeal,
I mock'd the virtues which I could not feel.
No sacred ardour sanctified the deed,
And nerved my arm to make a tyrant bleed ;
But a base lust to trample on the great,
A fiendish instinct, a demoniac hate.
" Whence was that sound ? It came not from below ;
There none but wanderers of the waves can go :
Hush !—many voices hath the stormy sea.
I tremble—do I tremble causelessly ?
Death, I have heard thy shout, and seen thy frown,
When stooping Slaughter mowed his thousands down ;
And I have couch'd beside the sever'd limb,
When Horror call'd on night to cover him,
And thou wast dreadful then. But for this hour
Hast thou reserved thy soul-subduing power :
Thee never, Death, did I invoke, but still
I bow'd to mightiest circumstance my will ;
And, in the darkest hour and stormiest shade,
Look'd ever calmly for the dawn delayed.
Yet would that thou hadst laid me with the slain,
Where England's bravest fell on Marston's plain ;
Little they feared thee, King of Terrors, then,
Now not at all : for in the war of men
They fought, and, shouting, died. But thus to meet
Thy certain aim, and count thy coming feet,
While the half bloodless heart forgets to beat—
To meet thee thus, O Death ! is terrible !
Hush !—the hoarse cry is drown'd in ocean's yell.
Hark !—voices, murmurs, and the steps of men !
What ! will they storm the lion in his den ?
Hither my evil Angel led my feet,
And here deserted me. But, from retreat
Cut off, I still can rush upon the foe ;
And bold shall be the arm that lays me low,"
He said, and rush'd into the darkness lone,
And from his scabbard flash'd his falchion, known
By many a deathful deed in fields of blood,
Where guileful Cromwell's iron warriors stood
Like wave-girt rocks that spurn th' assailing sea.
Through rifted clouds the moon look'd fearfully,
On ocean's mountain'd plain and frantic foam,
And rocks and caves—the ocean-prowler's home.
He listen'd—but he heard no human sound ;
He spoke—but none replied ; he gazed around,
And half expected, on night's rushing wing,
To meet the frown of some unearthly thing.
Lo ! in the light a dangerous pavement lay,
Bright, dewy, cold, th' eternal marble gray !
And, at his feet, with bare and hoary head,
Expiring, gasp'd the object of his dread.
O'er no arm'd spy, by kingly vengeance sent—
O'er dying Age reclined the Malcontent.
Raised in his arms the panting wretch he bore,
And laid him on the cavern's gleaming floor ;
But as he stoop'd beside the fire to bare
The ice-cold limbs, and wring the dripping hair,
Glanced o'er the stranger's brow his troubled eye,
And, shuddering, he arose, and raised a cry
Of terror ; backward sinking on his knee,
With lifted hands, like one who starts to see
The features of the murder'd on his way,
And, bent on flight, but palsied by dismay,
Falls chain'd to what he dreads. Why shrank the bold,
Appall'd by weakness, weaponless, and old ?
Because he saw in that expiring man
An injured friend. In youth their love began—
A love that, save in Heaven, could not endure ;
So warm it was, so passionately pure,
More like the love of angels than of men ;
And both were bless'd, for both were guiltless then,
And one was guiltless still. He, wise in vain,
Sow'd hope and love, but reap'd despair and pain ;
And too severely wrong'd to be forgiven,
Now stood between the Malcontent and Heaven.
By seas divided, and by years of pain,
To part for ever, lo ! they met again !
And Moreland's gloomy spirit seem'd to mourn
O'er hopeless hours that never could return,
And listen to a sweet and soul-felt tone,
That long, long lost, vibrated to his own.
The wintry frost of sixty hapless years,
All dark and sunless, melted into tears :
He watch'd the struggling sufferer where he lay,
And wept as he would weep his heart away.

BOOK III.

'Tis morning ; o'er the billows glimmers gray
The growing light of slow advancing day ;
Restored to life and thought, the wanderer hoar
Wakes in the cave high-roof'd on ocean's shore.
Stretch'd near the fire above the restless waves,
With many a pause between, he weeps and raves ;
Now sad his speech and low—now wildly loud ;
And near him Moreland sits in sadness bowed,

Turning, at times, his altered face aside,
The growing trouble on his brow to hide;
Oft through his fingers and the gushing tear
He views his guest; and tawny gleams of fear
Course his sad cheek, and to his gloomy eye
Give milder light and tamed ferocity.

But when, with counterfeited voice, he strove
To soothe the dying sufferer, and remove
His mind's disease, and health's destroyer—fear—
Bidding him hope there yet was comfort near,
And that he yet his distant home should see—
Then Eustace raised his eye of misery,
And fix'd it on the speaker, with a look
That from his cheek the sickly yellow took,
And left it white. "But what art thou?" he said;
"My languid eyes, with death's dim films o'erspread,
Scarce see thy face; yet I, on some far shore,
Have heard, methinks, that hollow voice before."
"Nay," answer'd Moreland: "for, from youth to age,
Here have I dwelt in this my hermitage;
And made my feet familiar with the glens
Of unclimb'd mountains, and the perilous dens
Where the wolf sleeps, and wilds, since time began,
Untrodden, save by me, a homeless man."
"'Tis well!" said Eustace; "and, my friend unknown,
Thou soon again shalt sojourn here alone.
A little while, and thou with up-piled stones
And scanty earth, shalt sepulchre my bones.
Oh, I have long conversed with sighs and groans!
Long—I have been acquainted long with tears;
And I am old, and older than my years.
But tell not me of home. I *have* no home—
The wretched can have none. I love to roam
A wanderer from myself; and, had my soul
Wings, I would fly beyond the farthest pole—
Yea, cast behind me earth and every star,
And dwell in soulless, lifeless space afar.
Home, saidst thou? To the grave, thou babbler—go,
And ask the worm what home hath hopeless wo?
Home!—what is home? O read the answer here!
'Tis not the hearth, but that which makes it dear.
I dream'd of such a home—that dream is gone;
And now I seek my home—the silent one;
For life is joyless, hope is fled, and fear;
Death, death alone remains—and he is near.
Life's glow, departing, yet informs my cheek;
Feeble, not feeblest. I have strength, though weak,
Enough to feel, in Nature's fainting strife,
More than all pain—this weariness of life.
O Death! how long? O let me—let me die!
There is a love eternal in the sky;
And there I may forgive—perhaps forget.
I do not curse—I will be patient yet;
Though they whom most I scorn'd contemn'd me most,
I *will* be patient—Will? Oh, while we boast
Our wo-tried constancy, we but sustain,
Because we must, inevitable pain!
"I know it well—I know I rave in vain.
What brought me hither, say'st thou? Love and hate,
A faithless friend, a woman, and my fate.
I once was rich, nor dwelt beneath the sky
A flatter'd fool more fortune-cursed than I;
And Love's false morn was bright, too bright to last:
But, when the dogs bark'd at me as I pass'd,
And worldlings, if they met me, travell'd fast,
Ann tore at once the bandage from my mind;
I gaz'd on truth, and wish'd my heart were blind!
"I was undone! by Ann and all forgot;
Cold—naked—hungry—and she sorrow'd not;
Distracted—and she soothed not my despair;
Sick, and in prison—and she came not there.
Night was around me, and I wept alone,
Despised, neglected, left unheard to groan.
But when I rose out of the earth, and light
And Nature's face rush'd lovely on my sight,
How did the bosom-serpent greet her mate?—
With looks of rancour and with words of hate;
And wretch she call'd the wretch herself had made.
She cursed me to my weeping eyes—she bade
My children curse me! and I wish'd again
To hear the clanking of my dungeon chain.
But Julia was the sweetest child of all:
She kiss'd, she bless'd me, she alone did call
Her mother's husband 'Father!' While the rest,
Jane and Matilda, (though my own,) express'd
No joy their sire's long-absent face to see,
Julia—the youngest—Julia welcomed me!
Dear Julia!—on my broken heart she smiled;
Dear Julia!—wherefore was not she my child?
"But never will I drink again from cup
Made by the skill of mortal. I scoop'd up
The water in the shallows of the sand,
And drank it from the hollow of my hand.
Nay, do not think that I myself deceive,
But trust what I, in horror, must believe.
They gave me poison in my drink; and *he*
Smiled as I drank it; and—O misery!
I burn'd and lived; I burn'd—and yet I live.
God, in thy mercy infinite, forgive—
Forgive them if thou canst! and I will try—
Will wrestle hard to pardon both and die."
Breathless, he paused; and Moreland tried again
To soothe with gentle words his bosom's pain;
And bade him hope, since life's worst ills were o'er,
Heav'n yet had earthly good for him in store.
"Good?" Eustace cried—"O speak of good no more!
It is a word that I have heard of—'Good?'
O name it not to me! I understood
Its import feelingly when life was new,
And faith a child; for then my Ann was true.
But now I have no name. An eaglet fledged,
Or, like the homeless tempest, privileged
To wander where I will, I breathe on her
Forgiveness, mix'd with curses; and prefer,
Before all roofs of faithless man, the sky,
And envy every wild bird's wing on high.
A moment she was mine—one bright brief hour;
And then she fled in darkness! Like a flower,
Dropp'd from an infant's hand into the deep,
She left my bosom, and to troubled sleep
Consign'd my dreams. A vision bright and brief,
Joy fled to come no more! and, like a leaf
Shook from the bough when winds of winter rave,
I float and whiten on the desert wave.
"Thus was I left, but not alone, to sigh.
Though sickness quench'd the light in Julia's eye.
My Julia faded. Mine?—she died, at last,
And then the bitterness of wo was past;
For I had loved her better than my own,
Because she kiss'd me, when my soul, bow'd down
By rancour's curse, despair'd. I follow soon;
My day of life wanes nightward fast from noon,
And evening lowers. Yet, once more let me gaze
On ocean, stretch'd in wild morn's clouded blaze.
For Ann and I (she lov'd thee, Ocean, well)
Have watch'd on other shores thy hollow swell,
So brightly blue, so beautifully bright,
When every billow was a ridge of light,

And light seem'd life. But she will hear no more
The tumult of thy loud-resounding shore:
I follow next, for she, too, went before.
O native scenes, I see ye in my soul!
O England, green, where southern billows roll!
Ye towers of Sheaf, where royal Mary wept!
Ye banks of Don, where oft my childhood slept!
Ye giant oaks, that, from the adder's cliff,
Frown'd o'er the dark wave and my gliding skiff!
Thou, Wincobank, on whom the golden cheek
Of eve rests loveliest! and ye hills of Peak,
That softly melt into the airy blue,
And hear the lark beneath—adieu! adieu!"
Here paused he; but ere long, in accents low,
Resumed, with dying lips, his tale of wo;
As, whispering, thro' the gorse on Bretland's breast,
The dark March tempest sighs itself to rest.
"Oh, she was foul and fair! Yet once her mind
Was lovely as her face; and if the wind
Ne'er kiss'd a ringlet on a fairer cheek,
Her spirit once was, as the twilight meek,
And, as the wild flower's blushes, innocent.
Yet to the grave with spotted name she went,
Before the faces of astonish'd men.
I saw her strive with death, and wept not then.
She wept—and raised her trembling hands in pray'r,
And mine were rais'd with her's; for I was there,
E'en by her bed of pain. I saw the fear
Of death convulse her frame, and in her ear
I whisper'd hope. Then from her bosom broke
Sad thanks in sighs, and, sobbing loud, she spoke:
'Pardon'd by thee, I seek my shameful grave:
Oh, still, my Lord, thy injur'd heart forgave!
Tender and true, though sever'd from my hate,
Thy love still liv'd, and sought no second mate.
O may I meet thee in those realms divine!
Or is eternal Mercy less than thine?
Yet will I love, and hear thee—see thee still;
And wo shall bow to my triumphant will.
Yet will I snatch thy whisper from the gale,
And o'er the gates of sin and death prevail.
What chain can hold the disembodied mind?
Grim hell may torture thought, but cannot bind.
And when, released from this disastrous clay,
To happier regions thou shalt wing thy way,
My soul, by rigid Justice unforgiv'n,
Shall weep, an outcast on the verge of heaven;
At distance see my children wander free,
And never bid adieu to them or thee!'
"I pour'd into her soul Religion's balm;
I watch'd her awful silence, and was calm;
And when she rais'd her eye, resign'd and meek,
Warm on my wither'd hand, and wo-worn cheek,
I felt her last—last tear. She spoke no more:
The sinful sufferer's many pangs were o'er,
And mine scarce felt. I heard the shovell'd clay
Fall heavy on her bier. I turn'd away
With bursting heart. Lo! as my head I bow'd
I saw th' adulterer in the homeward crowd!
But, like a frozen sea, on which the wind
Can raise no billow, slept my awe-quelled mind;
All angry feeling from my bosom fled,
The passions all were chain'd—my heart was dead.
"I may not lie where Ann in cold earth lies;
But might I see again with these sad eyes
The clay that is her pillow, they would close
Happy to shut for ever on the woes
Of such a world as this. I weep for her:
I am not stone: she was a sufferer,
And, though a sinner, yet a Magdalene:
She died repentant, and was loveliest then.
Oh, she was false to me! but I am true;
And, when she died, we then were wed anew.
The worms, the worms our bridal bed prepare;
Long waits the bride—in vain! I come not there.
Sever'd in life, still, still let death divide;
Why should I slumber by the lost one's side?
Yet, when the trump of doom shall rend the sky,
And wake all sleepers, she shall meet an eye
That could not meet her's frowning. Oh, her breast,
Though dearest still, is spotted and unbless'd:
No pillow meet for me, although I long for rest!
"Let me not doubt God's justice! Oh, what fate
Pursues my race, as with a demon's hate?
Evil must come of evil! that I know;
But how have we incurr'd this shame, this wo,
This desolation? How long must I bear
This fever of the soul, and, in despair,
Invoke the worm that will not come and feed?
Still, still I breathe, while woes on woes succeed.
Happy in this, Ann did not live, like me,
To mourn her daughter's guilt and misery.
Lured by two villains from their native shore,
By me pursued in vain, and seen no more,
They fled—they left me, hopeless and alone,
To curse their birth, and name them with a groan.
As back I voyaged, the tempestuous wind
Bow'd the tall masts, and heaved the seas behind;
The thunder knew me, the flash look'd me through,
The billows wild the man of sorrows knew;
And ocean would not spare one friendly wave
To whelm my misery in a briny grave.
Dash'd from the reeling deck by surge and blast,
I sunk—I rose—I reach'd the strand at last.
And when thou found'st me on the rock's cold brow,
I was not sure if then I dream'd or no:
From mile-high crags, girt midway by the storm,
Th' adult'ress seemed to hurl my faded form;
And thou might'st deem the fierce and parching wind
Had left of me no trace, save dust behind—
Wan dust, on which a viewless finger cold
Had traced the lines that all with dread behold."
"Why dost thou turn away thy brow severe?
Why would'st thou hide from me thy generous tear?
The rock's dark tenant melts at my distress!
Thou weepest, cavern'd king of loneliness!
Alas!—but no, it cannot be; for thou
Didst rove, thou say'st, in childhood, on the brow
Of star-lov'd mountains hoar since Time began
Pathless and wild, and seldom sought by man.
Thou say'st, I have not known thee; and mine eyes,
Dim as my troubled spirit, recognise
In thee distinctly nought; yet—oh, thy scowl
Brings back a wintry darkness to my soul,
Like the remembrance of a dream, that leaves
No definite impression, while it grieves
The heart that feels, and long will feel, how dire,
How black it stood, and what a livid fire
Gleam'd o'er its features of obscurity!
Or, like the sea, when midnight storms are high,
Heard, but not seen, while terror on the shore
Sees the gun flash, but cannot hear its roar;
And long with eyes strain'd dizzy o'er the main,
Vainly expects to hail that flash again!
"Farewell, kind tenant of the ocean's cave!
I hear no more the restless billow rave.
Thy features vanish from my view: I reel,
From sense to gloom. What is it that I feel,
Foretelling stranger feelings yet to be,
Ere all is past? A shuddering agony
That is not pain. O thou most terrible!
Thou nothing, that marr'st all things! canst thou tell,
When from the block the sever'd head falls low,
And glaring eyes seem conscious of the blow,
And quivering lips in soundless words complain,
What pangs may writhe the agonizing brain,

Where thought, perchance, still lingers? I shall know
Soon the deep secret, veil'd from all below,
And what the dying feel when sense is dumb:—
Thou beckonest me, black angel! and I come."
Thus, in the ocean-cavern's glimmering light,
To Moreland spake the wanderer of the night.
Question'd in vain, his words replied no more;
But Moreland bent the lifeless body o'er,
Fix'd in the mute intensity of pain,
And lived, in thought, his past years o'er again.
What, hopeless rebel! would'st thou give to be
Wrong'd, like thy victim, and as pure as he?

WITHERED WILD FLOWERS.

To the Author of "Essays on the Formation and Publication of Opinions"—the Bentham of Hallamshire—as a tribute of respect, unworthy, but most sincere, I dedicate this humble Poem.

BOOK I.

Don, like a weltering worm, lies blue below,
And Wincobank, before me, rising green,
Calls from the south the silvery Rother slow,
And smiles on moors beyond, and meads between.
Unrivall'd landscape! Oh, it is a scene
That to remembrance brings the hope-bless'd days,
But not their hope! And at my feet, serene
And cold lies he, and deaf to mortal praise,
Who from this mount, erewhile, rejoiced to gaze;
Who in this temple, plain and unadorn'd,
Duly as Sabbath came, throughout the year,
The word of Him in Jewry heard and scorn'd,
In Jewry scourged and slain, rejoiced to hear;
While Age shed oft th' involuntary tear,
And younger voices sweetly join'd to sing
The warbled anthem, plaintive, soft, and clear,
Till soar'd the soul on pure devotion's wing,
And God look'd down, and angels, listening.
Daughters of Memory! shall the good man sleep
Unnoted, though immortal, in the grave,
While forms of angel-mockery seem to weep,
O'er tyrant vile, or viler willing slave?
The lying line shall prosperous villains crave.
To bid their flatter'd baseness live again?
Shall verse from sure oblivion try to save
Each worthless name? and no unvenal pen
Write, "Here lies Nature's child, the best of men;"
The sire of that mourn'd youth, whose soul of fire
Cherish'd in mine a spark that else had died,
The love of Milton's song, and Ossian's lyre,
And Burns, to glory's noblest sons allied?
Cold o'er thy bosom shall the earthworm glide, [a]
Where communed oft that low-laid youth with me;
And shall I hang my harp on Rother's side,
For ever mute and stringless there to be,
Teacher and Friend! without one strain to thee?
Teacher and Friend, who bad'st me syllable
Words cull'd from learning's page with weary eye!
Thy patience taught me zealously and well,
But could not teach, like thee, to live and die;
To envy nought beneath the ample sky;
To mourn no evil deed, no hour misspent;
And, like a living violet, silently
Return in sweets to heaven what goodness lent,
Then bend beneath the chastening shower content.
But thou no more, with eye refresh'd, shalt see [b]
The long-watch'd seedling from the soil aspire,
Or bind the rose, or train the gadding pea;
No more shalt thou for victor flowers inquire,
Or proudly hear th' expected guest admire
Thy gemm'd auricula, a growing flame,
Or polyanthus, edged with golden wire, [c]
The poor man's flower, that lifts to humble fame,
Till e'en in print appears his envied name.
Who now shall tend thy plants, thy priceless flowers,
Emblems of thee, but not more pure than thou?
The morn shall miss thee, and the dewy hours
Of eve deplore, as I deplore thee now;
And Spring shall pass her hand athwart her brow,
When not a gem of thine shall deck her hair,
Then shake in haste the dewdrop from the bough,
And to the spot where thou art laid repair;
"Where is my Druid?" Death shall answer—
"There!"
How hopeless, happy Spirit, is the groan,
When God calls Guilt from all his joys away!
But heavenly-sweet is Music's saddest tone,
When o'er the lyre of Love Death's fingers stray;
Less sweet the sound, when winds of midnight play [d]
On that wild harp which well thy skill could frame.
And when thy dust was mingled with the clay,
To weep o'er thee, Affection—Friendship, came,
And there was one who could not sob thy name!
Thou, guest of angels, hast of praise no need;
But I have need of thine and virtue's aid:
And taught by thee each deathless lay to read,
Shall I forget my teacher lowly laid?
Though every strain of mine, alas! must fade,
Like idle vapour on the barren sea,
Shall I forget the Christian undismay'd,
The meekest child of truth and purity?
I sing of Death; and shall I not of thee?
But unlike thee are Passion's sin-bound slaves,
That tinge my song with beauty's blasted bloom,
While to my saddest theme I call the waves
Of farthest seas, and homeless storms, that boom
O'er worlds of woods, a universe of gloom!
Swamps, dens, and caves, beneath one boundless pall,
Where serpents lurk, their passing prey to doom,
Lone horror shudders at the grim wolf's call,
And dwells barbarian Man, most savage he of all.

Joy after wo, as after darkness light!
And sad Newhaven will not weep to-night.
O happy meeting! peace and valour meet,
There is rejoicing in the town and fleet,
Light in the windows, laughter at the board,
For dire Metacom quell'd, and peace restored. [e]
Amid his warriors, Winslow sits in pride,
With Kirk (his guest from England) at his side—
A martial libertine, to falsehood true,
Who tells of Milton much, and Cromwell too;
Of Charles the Martyr, hapless and revered;
And hunted regicides, who fled and fear'd.
And there, too, smiling on his smiling friends,
Yet pale with thought, the saint-like Elliot bends;
Who to the naked Indian's leafy shed
Proclaimed the resurrection of the dead;
And, while the savage on his accents hung,
Gave the bless'd Word of God another tongue.
And beauty's brightest eyes are glancing near;
Nor doth the sternly courteous cavalier
From transatlantic charmers turn away,
Or deem the British fair more fair than they;
For, Roman matron in her port and air,
There Portia sits; or is Cornelia there?
Or Agrippina? not in widow'd weeds,
But glorying in her glorious husband's deeds.
'Tis Mary, sharer of thy heart and bed,
Danger-tried Winslow! And, with languish'd head,

While scandal marks the trouble of her eye,
Fix'd in desponding thought's intensity,
Like guilt in sleep, or passion in his shroud,
Though gay no more, still proudest of the proud,
Tall Mary's taller sister sits beside
Henley, the marksman, with the lip of pride.
How changed, Senena, is thy downcast eye!
He who knows wherefore, fain would whisper why;
And sacrifice a maiden's all, her name,
That coxcombs might exult, and prudes defame.
Behold her cheek! Still, still it hath its rose—
Alas! not that which freshens as it grows!
But one whose sweets the heart will not forget—
Pensive and fading, though not faded yet!
Her soul seems frost-bound on its lovely throne,
Like beauteous life by winter turn'd to stone:
The impassion'd crystal wants but warmth and breath,
And thought's expression lives and speaks in death;
The icy charm, insatiate, we behold,
While admiration feels his blood run cold.
"If your wide wilderness of wants and woes,"
Said Kirk to Winslow smiling, "can disclose,
Amid its horrors, flowers superb as these,
We need not wonder that your deserts please.
Fair flowers, by Heaven! the stateliest too they are
That ever bloom'd beneath Love's dewy star!
But one, as if transferr'd from Paradise,
And sorrowing for lost Heav'n, seems fix'd in ice;
Her lofty graces win us, and depress,
Awe while they charm, and chill with loveliness,"
He said, and with a soldier's freedom gazed
On sad Senena; who her eye upraised,
And, with a glance around the circle thrown,
In each heart's secret fear'd to read her own;
While Mary's eye met hers, and took and gave
Pangs, like remember'd freedom to the slave.
"Fair, native flowers our rugged land adorn,"
Said Winslow; "but my wife is British born.
She, from the rage of civil discord, brought
In childhood hither, scarce remembers aught
Of sea-girt home; yet still that home is dear,
And England's praise is music to her ear."
"Madam," said Kirk, "you wrong your native isle.
England, defrauded of so bright a smile,
When back she hails me from the sterile sea,
Though rich in beauty, will seem poor to me.
But pine you not at heart to see once more
Your wave-rock'd cradle, our Britannian shore?"
The matron answer'd—while her graver eye
Reproved the soldier's fearless flattery—
"In England, none who know and love me live;
I have not there one living relative;
And therefore feel I small desire to see
The foam-girt land of my nativity;
Where Cavalier and Roundhead hail and bless
Charles and the law, whose rule is happiness."
"Yet here," said Kirk, "by dangers compass'd round,
Ye dread the Indian whoop in every sound.
I am a soldier—I have look'd on blood;
And, on the howling battle-field, withstood
Death's sternest menace; yet Metacom's deeds
Appal my heart, that shudders while it bleeds,
To hear the horrors of his butchery,
Which spares nor stooping age nor infancy."
"For his defeat," said Elliot, "thanks to heaven!
Yet be the savage in the man forgiven.
His loss our gain; as he descends we rise,
And grow and spread, like flame, before his eyes.
If every White Man aims at him a blow,
Justly he sees in every White a foe;
And, doom'd in combat or in flight to die,
Does he not well to face his enemy?
Sage, patriot, hero, king! for Nature's rights,
Brave as our own Caractacus, he fights.
Reluctant draws the knife, and heaves a sigh;
Then wars on fate and possibility.
For, arm'd to extirpate his hated race,
The Whites shall hunt them o'er earth's blasted face;
Till, in the ocean of the farthest west,
The last Red Man shall shroud his bleeding breast."
"Where ruined Memphis," Winslow said, and sigh'd,
"Lies like a giant blasted in his pride;
Where Tadmore droops, by herbless sands embraced,
A childless mother in the houseless waste;
Where old Athena, who can never die,
Speaks of the dead in wan sublimity;
Where mourns th' eternal city, still a queen,
The traveller weeps o'er glories that have been;
There still the portals of the gods remain,
By Desolation's mace assailed in vain.
But here no column, with pathetic brow,
While awe-struck Time reclines in tears below,
To other years, and men unborn, shall tell
Where more than Roman valour fought and fell."
"Their very name shall perish!" Henley cried,
With bitter smile of factious spleen and pride;
"Their very name shall perish! scorn'd by Time,
Nor live a day, like courtly things in rhyme.
Alas! few flatterers kneel prostrated low
To him whose sole exchequer is his bow;
And undeceived, unsung, that king may die
Who hath no humbler palace than the sky."
Rebellious to his will, that strove to hide
In cold indifference his offended pride,
Kirk's darkening visage frown'd a mute reply,
While Henley, pausing, fixed on him his eye;
Then placing on his head his cap unplumed,
Th' irreverent wrangler thus his taunts resumed:—
"'God save the King!' our loyal wilds exclaim,
But not, God save Metacom, poor and lame.
Well know we, courtly sir, that Power is Right:
The blind themselves see worth in wealth and might;
For Power's adorers only worship Fate,
And Power was never illegitimate.
Strong is the king who reigns by right divine,
And nobles round him cringe, for armies shine.
Before him Justice sits, nor sleeps, nor winks,
And vultures die, or no corruption stinks.
For gaping crowds with liberal hand he carves,
And merit at his table feeds or starves.
A god on earth, and fear'd like him of hell,
The good who serve him are rewarded well.
Secure he reigns, untroubled, undismay'd,
For loyal are his servants—and are paid."
Thus spoke he, factious—mischief his delight,
Himself a compound of disdain and spite,
To none submitting, and insulting all,
Sedition on his lips, his life a brawl.
He ended, sneering. Kirk turn'd black with ire,
And on his forehead darkness seem'd on fire.
Lo, as the courtier frown'd, Senena rose;
Her soul was struggling with unutter'd woes;
Pale on her cheek expired the blasted bloom:
In Mary's eye sate discontent and gloom—
And sad Senena, tottering, left the room.
All wondering, gazed! But Kirk, with gloomy stare, (f)
Perused each sun-brown'd warrior's haughty air,
And, starting, almost fear'd rebellion there.
In Winslow's mien, a Lambert seem'd to lower—
In Winslow's form, a Cromwell seem'd to tower!

He shrank from Henley's shadow on the wall,
And inly mutter'd, "Traitors are they all."
Frowning, he rose, and sternly waved adieu,
And, mute and slow, retired. Then all withdrew,
But not all silent. Boisterous Henley laugh'd;
And too, too much of gall his heart had quaff'd,
To spare the angry messenger of kings,
And deem abuse and scorn forbidden things.
Midnight was past; but not a streak of gray
Dawn'd in the east, to tell of coming day.
No murmur on the dreams of silence broke;
The moon still slumber'd o'er the gospel-oak, (g)
Beneath whose shade Newhaven's fathers kept
Their first sweet Sabbath, grateful while they wept
To think of England, whence their steps were driven
To worship in his wilds the God of Heaven.
Blue, brightly blue, was night's ethereal hall,
When, like a form that decks some temple's wall,
And paler than the marble, wander'd forth
Senena, the betray'd; and the cold north
Play'd with her hair, that sought her feet below,
And on her shoulders lay like night on snow.
Crisp in the night-wind shook her single vest;
The moon look'd calmly on her naked breast,
And the wan stars beheld with awed delight,
One like themselves, sad, silent, cold, and white.
What magic was there in that courtier's speech,
That words like his the secret heart could reach,
And make the fairest of the fair and proud
Appal with beauty midnight's darkening cloud?
Or, did wan death, in poor Senena's form,
Walk with unechoed step, and quit the worm?
Say, *did* that apparition breathe and glow?
Did the heart heave beneath that breast of snow?
I know her by that hopeless look and tear;
'Tis she, Senena's self; but wherefore here?
When last that broad oak's branches o'er her moan'd,
Low at the feet of Henley laid, she groan'd;
Pray'd him to save a maiden's all—her fame;
Pray'd him to snatch her from a grave of shame;
And when speech fail'd, her tears, that silent ran,
Implored a monster to become a man.
But now—What burden bears she on her breast,
And fondly bending, kisses into rest?
A mother and no wife, she sobs forlorn
O'er what she loves and dreads—her infant born
In secret. Lo! three lovely, pallid things,
Fairer than fancy's wild imaginings,
Night, at this moment, as she sits alone,
Sees from the silence of her starry throne—
Like the swan's wing, Senena's cheek of wo;
The moon, high-placed on heaven's majestic brow;
And the moon's image on the wave below,
That glimmers deep and still. Is it to lave
Her raven tresses, that above the wave
Senena bends? Athwart her outstretched arms
They flow, and veil, but cannot hide her charms.
Say, while recumbent o'er the wave she stands,
Why heaves her heart with her extended hands?
What sound, O God! was that? And, hark! a scream
Succeeds that plunge. Lo! on the strangling stream,
With head thrown back, erect she gazes there,
While horror stiffens her uplifted hair;
And her eyes gleam dilated, pale, and wild.
Oh, hath she cast into the wave her child?
That cry again! but fainter—and away
She turns and flies; yet backward, in dismay,
Instinctively to see some dreadful thing,
She looks, and stops, intensely listening.
A sob?—how feeble! and the little breast
That heaved it forth is ever now at rest;
For, ah! where is the burden that she bore,
Press'd to her bosom, and kiss'd o'er and o'er
With such sad fondness? Horror hears her sighs;
And, like a bird with wounded wing, she flies
In haste yet slowly. She hath pass'd the hill;
The echoes slumber on earth's bosom chill;
Smooth flows the wave again, and all is still.
Lo! she hath reach'd her chamber, in despair!
And, scarce alive, she sinks into her chair,
The stone-still image of all-dreaded death!
Mary bends o'er her with suspended breath,
And all is silence, save the throbbing heart.
Ah! bid pulsation from its fount depart!
To hush the *heart* is woman's hardest task.
How Mary's look inquires! What would it ask
But what she knows too well, and dreads to know?
Oh! which sad bosom feels severest wo?
Which sister-mourner do we pity most—
That lost one, or the wretch who deems her lost?
The taper trembles on its little stand;
Ah, no! Senena, with convulsive hand,
Hath dash'd it out! and wan she bends in gloom:
Burst Mary's tears! she rushes from the room.
And now doth guilt sit lighter on thy breast,
Poor, fall'n Senena? Sank thy heart, oppress'd,
Dreading thy picture in a sister's eye,
Dreading to meet a *sister's* scrutiny?
Alas—alas! guilt fears to be alone!
And wouldst thou hide in solitude the groan
Wrung by remorse from conscience in despair?
Oh, questions vainly urged! Nor force nor prayer
Can stop Time's flight, and bid the present stay,
Nor tears recall the deed of yesterday.
No—no! but Heaven can pardon and deliver
The suffering child of sin—O God! forgive her.

BOOK II.

Love!—but not thou, whose mightiest Hand afar
Guides in his printless path each wheeling star.
Love!—but not thou, our type of heaven, whose breast
Rocks beauty's rosiest babe in smiles to rest.
Despairing Love! who long'st in blood to steep
The bed where thou dost toss, and fain wouldst sleep!
How like a lily, stain'd with murder's gore,
Thy sorrow weeps! Yet, not for evermore
Shalt thou, a flower distain'd with mourning, bend
Through ages, rolling slow, of hopeless end;
And while the funerals of the stars pass by,
Still tremble in the blast of destiny.
Thy guilt hath tears, though darkest guilt it be,
And pitying Heaven hath mercy e'en for thee.
It was the evening of a sunless day:
Slowly the heavy vapours roll'd away,
Pouring no more the rain. The weary gale
Bow'd still th' indignant pine; and chill, and pale,
And indistinct, each watery object nigh
Wore the dim hues of distance to the eye.
It was the hour that pensive thought loves best,
The gloaming hour, when toil retires to rest,
When music's voice is sweet as love's caress,
When dying light is loveliest loneliness.
When hope's tear flows more limpid than the dew,
And tearless wretches try to weep anew,
And find a joy in grief. While charged with rain,
Each blossom droop'd—like innocence, in pain
And silence weeping—with desponding soul,
Senena from her joyless chamber stole.
Instinctively she sought the fatal shore,
That saw a deed which she must still deplore,
And turning from the past her hopeless view,
Like Monfort, sigh, "Would, would it were to do!"

She sought that fatal shore—but found not there
Joy in her grief, nor hope in her despair;
For evil tongues were busy with her fame,
And conscience trembled at her whisper'd name.
Hopeless, she longed to mount th' unhallow'd bark,
And sail the deep irremeable dark:
On death she call'd, but with averted eye;
The dead she envied, yet she fear'd to die.
But not unwatch'd she went. She heard the sound
Of well-known footsteps—yet she look'd not round;
And Henley stood beside her, blank in awe.
Her hand from his she deign'd not to withdraw:
He press'd it, while his own with fever burn'd;
But her's, clay cold, no pressure soft return'd.
Humbl'd, he ask'd, with shame unwonted, why
Such dreadful coldness froze him from her eye,
And why they met not? With averted air,
The mourner heard; and, strengthen'd by despair,
Stood in her silence. Yearning for the grave,
She watch'd the tremble of the conscious wave
That chilly clasp'd her babe of hapless love;
And thought of heaven, but dared not look above.
Long thus, in mute abstraction, on the strand,
Fix'd, stern, and calm, she moved nor eye nor hand.
Unmann'd, he wept, and clasp'd, and kiss'd her knee:
But, when he spoke of years of bliss to be,
Of Love's sweet home, of Hymen's saffron morn,
And that lost babe which yet he deem'd unborn,
Then from her eyes the fire of madness flash'd,
Her foot to earth th' astonish'd suppliant dash'd;
Her anguish found a torturing voice, and spoke,
And execration in her breast awoke:—
"No lightning blasts thee!—sleeps avenging heaven?
Go, ask His mercy, and die unforgiven!
Nay, bloodless image of dismayed surprise!
Start not—I cannot stab thee with mine eyes:
My hand, unweapon'd, spares thy worthless life;
But, shouldst thou meet me when it grasps a knife,
Be deadly wan thy cheek, and slack thy knee!"
With glowing cheek, and awful energy,
She spoke her words of madness and despair;
And Henley heard them with a madman's air.
Slowly he left her, wondering, stunn'd, appall'd.
She gasp'd—she wept; she wished her words recall'd:
So weak is wo! Worlds, worlds she would have given,
Could he have heard her pray for him to heaven—
Could he have heard her say—"Though base to me,
My dying lips invoke no curse on thee!
No! live, and think of her who yet forgave,
Though sent by thee a murd'ress to the grave.
Live! when the charms that rivall'd once the rose,
And rival now the printless snow, repose
In that deep darkness which no midnight knows—
Yes; when the hand that oft thy lip has prest
And this fond pillow of thy head, my breast,
And these long-tearless eyes, that *should* not weep
For one who hath no heart, shall moulder deep
In misery's sure and last asylum—live!
And may offended Heaven, like me, forgive."
Tears soothed her spirit; and relenting thought
Half robb'd her of the dire intent she brought.
But Henley heard not—saw not—on he went,
Staggering and faint, like one with labour spent;
And, flashing, rush'd his hot blood to his eyes.
He fell—what phantoms from the earth arise?
A form before him stood, in sorrow deep,
And beautiful as angels when they weep.
Wan, in the arms of that fair spectre, smiled,
Cold as the breast that pillowed it, a child,
Whose half-closed lips the lifeless teat still prest;
And, as the grateful infant sunk to rest,
The blue eyes langour stiffen'd into stone.
"Kiss, father, kiss thy child!" with hollow tone
A voice exclaim'd. "One kiss, and thou art clay!
Freeze in a kiss: be cold, and come away!
Husband, a marble lip thy sands hath told:
Cold was thy heart to us, and we are cold."
He started up; and, lo! he was alone!
The phantom mother and the child were gone,
But not th' unutterable awe that froze
Life in its fountain, as those phantoms rose.
While the gray mountains bade adieu to day,
Slow t'wards Senena's home he wound his way,
Yet scarce knew why. His knees each other smote,
And in his soul waked gloomy thought on thought,
The darkest last. Like a bright bow unstrung
Arose the crescent moon; but darkness hung
O'er her blue pathway, on the sky pourtrayed
In giant forms, slow moving, shade on shade.
Lo! high in Winslow's dwelling beams a light!
Far the ray flashes through the dusky night:
Before the light a gloomy form appears,
Reclined in troubled thought, perhaps in tears.
'Twas she, he thought, in woes and wrongs array'd,
Undone and lost Senena the betray'd.
"She weeps," he said—"she weeps in her despair!
Who wept? Alas! Senena was not there!
'Twas Mary, pondering by the taper's gloom
On poor Senena's crime—Senena's doom.
She deemed the lost one at that moment slept;
She more than feared her guilty, and she wept.
Senena did not sleep, she slept not yet:
But still her cheek with soothing tears was wet:
Almost she hoped that Heaven might yet forgive;
Almost she hoped, almost resolved to live;
But, as she watch'd the quivering billows near,
Her wan cheek darkened with unutter'd fear:
She shook and trembled like the restless wave—
At once her infants cere-cloth and its grave.
The troubled curtains of portentous night
Flung from their brightening folds a sudden light;
The waters seem'd to chide her as she stood!
A voice of mourning issued from the flood.
She started—on the surface rose to sight
A flower, a floating lily, bluely white:
She shriek'd—she stoop'd—she snatch'd it to the strand;
God! 'twas no lily—'twas a little hand!
Forth from the brine she drew her murder'd child,
The black rocks echoing wide her accents wild;
Close, and more close, her ice-cold babe she press'd,
And cold was comfort to her burning breast.
She gazed upon it, (and her hot tears came,)
Call'd it her child—it had no other name—
Kiss'd its blue sodden cheek, its bosom fair,
Its small round fingers, and its dusky hair;
Then to her heart she clasp'd its lips of snow,
And sobb'd, thrice happy in severest wo.
She wonder'd at its loveliness in death;
Scarcely believed she that it had not breath.
Once more she bent, once more a kiss to take,
And half expected that it yet would wake.
And then the fire returned into her brain:
And memory wept, and conscience groan'd again;
Wild, mutter'd accents from her bosom broke,
And words came to her tongue, and misery spoke:
"My murder'd baby! O that I had borne
The taunt of prudery, the scourge of scorn,
The penance due to sin! Would I had taught
Thy little lip to know this breast, and bought
Thy thankful smile with love; and o'er thee hung
To bless the name of mother from thy tongue!
Was this a mother's deed? Thy stifled cry
Still echoes in my soul, and will not die.

Bitter remembrance is my portion set,
Never on earth to smile or to forget;
And I must bear perdition in my breast,
And wear my hopeless anguish as a vest.
Why did I do this deed? Let Henley tell:
He, most unworthy, still is loved too well;
But he shall weep when I am lowly laid,
And wish, too late, I had not been betray'd.
Canst thou forgive me, baby? thou my child,
Canst thou forgive this wretch with blood defiled?
Baby, forgive me! I forgive thy sire—
O Heaven, forgive us both! and, in thine ire,
Remember him with mercy. Let me weep
A little longer, ere I try to sleep."
She ended; and, with greedy eye, devour'd
Th' expecting flood, while, on the dark heaven lower'd
The cloud, behind which shrank the shaded moon.
"Some natural tears she dropp'd, but wiped them soon."
Her long-lost mother to her thought arose:
She yearn'd to meet her—where all griefs repose.
Her sister's image, with imploring hand,
Beckon'd her, shrieking, from the fatal strand:
"Mary will weep—but she already weeps:
And, when in death the lost Senena sleeps,
Detraction will forget his useless gall,
And all-atoning death will cancel all.
Malice herself, that watch'd my fading name,
And hail'd with devilish joy my blasted fame,
Even Malice to my grave with tears shall come,
Even Envy's self forgive me in the tomb,
Own frailty's sister to themselves allied,
And cease to taunt pride's victim with her pride."
Did not her lover, lingering in her heart,
Bid the black shadow from her soul depart?
She thought of Henley with the lip of scorn,
And poor Senena at his feet, forlorn,
Fall'n from the throne of innocence to shame.
Red to her cheek returned th' indignant flame:
She wept no more, but, kneeling, look'd to heaven,
Then kiss'd her baby, and felt half forgiven.
That lifeless infant, in this direst hour,
Upheld her spirit with an arm of power,
More close she clasp'd it in a last embrace,
And plunged—still gazing on the lifeless face;
Deeply she plunged, and o'er her closed the stream.
Forth from her pall of clouds, with sudden beam,
Casting o'er rock and wave a silvery hue,
The moon walked bright into the heavenly blue.
'Twas then that Henley's homeward pathway led
His footsteps near Senena's watery bed.
The moonbeam lit his wild face as he pass'd;
The billow sigh'd his name—he stood aghast!
Perhaps Senena, in her dying pain,
Repentant, wish'd to live, but wish'd in vain!
Call'd she for help? or, too devotely true,
Bade she to that lov'd wretch a sad adieu?
He, bending o'er the rock in dread and wo,
Beheld a snowy bosom sinking slow
Beneath the wave, that quivered, as to tell,
By speechless signs, a tale of horror well.
Headlong he plunged; he grasp'd a stiffening hand;
He dragged the mother and the child to land;
Then kiss'd his victims as he wildly shook,
Imploring one sweet word, one glance, a look
Of mute forgiveness; clasp'd her senseless frame,
And made the caverns vocal with her name,
In vain repeated. On his lap he laid
Her head, yet warm, though lifeless. He survey'd,
Intensely still, the features. Pride was there
That triumph'd over death, and in despair
Looked like defiance arm'd: the brow was knit
In sternness, and the locks that shadow'd it
So darkly, moved not; on her lip sat pain,
Fix'd in the strength that died in struggles vain;
The large dark eyes, half shut in last repose,
Waited, he thought, to look a curse, and close;
And in her strong and dread embrace, she press'd
Th' unconscious infant to her beauteous breast.
He knew she named him with her dying breath;
He deem'd she curs'd him in the arms of death;
He wrong'd, in ignorance, his murder'd love.
Powerless and agonized, he tried to move
His victims: back he fell, and senseless lay.
Again he rose; but then the moon's last ray
Was trembling dimly in the horizon gray:
Through all his veins a deadly chillness crept,
And like a boy, the shivering giant wept.
Morn waked at length, without a cloud, and smiled
O'er wood and wave, on father, mother, child;
When Winslow took his wonted walk, to see
The early sun quaff pearls from every tree;
And t'wards the fatal spot advancing slow,
And pausing oft, he reached the scene of wo.
What eye of man could view it unappall'd;
He shrieked in horror, and on Henley call'd;
And Henley laugh'd in horror, from his head
Shaking the dews of night; then on the dead
With stone-still eye-balls stared, and ghastly stood.
There is a laughter that can chill the blood;
And, written on that brow, the wrath of fate
Tells of a ruin'd mind, a heart all desolate.

BOOK III.

On fall'n Senena's grave no grass is green;
But near it, lo! an open grave is seen!
And mournfully amid those mourners hangs
On Winslow's arm, her sister; and the pangs
Of sorrow live again, with strength renew'd;
She sees the grave, she groans, in soul subdued,
And, pausing, shudders. Slow, with heavy tread,
T'wards his last home the bearers bring the dead
In awe and silence: and with pensive air,
True to the last, Senena's dog is there.
Now on the fresh mould, recent from the spade,
Near the grave's margin Henley's bier is laid;
And Kirk of England calmly folds the pall:
He only, tearless, stands amid them all,
Cold as the granite on some lonely tomb,
Gilt by a sunbeam in the day of gloom;
While Elliot—and each brow is turned to him,[h]
And not a listener stirs, or lock or limb—
Faltering, with blinded eye and dewy cheek,
Beneath the gospel-oak essays to speak:—
"*The curse of God is in the house of sin.*"[i]
Thus Wisdom spoke; and thus a voice within
(If careless mortals listen as they ought)
Speaks to the silence of admonished thought.
O that the grave had language! that the dead
Could speak in thunder! and the page unread
In every heart, unfold to every eye
What all deplore, and struggle to deny!
The grave *hath* spoken! and the dead *do* speak!
Yes, harlot Pleasure, with the painted cheek,
Thy victims, in their deeds and in their doom,
Preach to our hearts, and teach us from the tomb;
Loudly they tell the conscious thought within,
Yet oft in vain, that sorrow's root is sin.
"Nay, sorrowing Mary! spare thy tears: I feel
My task is not to torture—I would heal
The soul that bears, with such a stifled groan,
So great a share in sorrow's not its own.
If Heaven's just wrath the worm of sin reproves,
His wrath-like kindness chastens whom it loves.

I need not prove what each tried bosom knows—
That man is misery's heir, and born to woes.
Oh, what a lesson reads the historic page
To suffering man, in vain from age to age,
Taught by recorded ills! And not the less
Is human being pain and weariness,
When unrecorded pass our race away,
Like forest leaves—like clouds that dim the day,
Like the flower's blush. But if the righteous here,
Though not unbless'd, shed oft a bitter tear,
Here and hereafter rich is their reward;
While sin shall surely suffer; and debarr'd,
By self-applauding conscience, from her heaven,
Shall suffer unconsoled, and murmur unforgiven.
" Man, without virtue, is a sunless day;
A midnight cloud that bursts and rolls away;
A flag that streams the waves of battle o'er,
And sinks in fiery gloom to rise no more;
A traveller wandering by the lightning's blaze
On cloud-clad rocks, where day would dread to gaze,
While horror listens with suspended breath,
And all around is danger, doubt, and death."
" Thou losing gambler, by thyself betray'd,
Thy life a game, with crime and folly play'd!
If the pure bosom is a temple bless'd—
If heaven is throned in every righteous breast—
Oh, by thy throb to bask in glory's blaze!
Oh, by the passion for undying praise,
That weds thy heart to human sympathy,
And proves thee made for immortality!
Sink not beneath the deep and treacherous wave,
In which low passion plunges passion's slave;
But swim with upward gaze on heavenly charms,
And win eternity with mortal arms.
" Oft cloudless day, ere noon, is overcast:
Bright colours soonest fade. We know the past—
We cannot know the future. Fair we deem
Of what seems fair, and well and wisely dream
That human good can last, though change is near
To wake and mock us. And when guilt and fear
Turn o'er th' unlook'd-on pages of the heart,
Well may we shudder if the angels start
And read in pale surprise!—In that sad tomb
Lie youth and beauty blasted in their bloom.
Let dust inform our hearts that sin is wo!
Once—but my tears *will* flow; and let them flow!
Nor would I be the only weeper here.
My friends, ye also weep, and well the tear
Becomes you. Jesus wept.—Ye modest maids,
Loveliest in tears, like flowers that woo the shades!
She once was bless'd and beautiful like you!
Ye pure in heart, she once was spotless too!
But, oh, when Virtue flies, what demons come!
Seize on her throne, convert her light to gloom,
Pollute her altar with unholy flame,
And of her *temple* make a den of shame!
So, when th' immortal spirit wings its way,
Stiff swells, and, blackening, stinks th' opprobrious clay;
Full feeds the hungry rat, and, loathing, flies;
Still feeds the greedier worm, and, poison'd, dies;
Till last, when e'en the worms' vile forms depart,
Rank blooms the deadly mushroom in the heart! (k)
Now fall'n from fame, and lost to life, to all,
Senena's worth seems cancell'd by her fall!
For prone to blame, and rigid in pretence,
Man forgets all things but lost innocence;
And ne'er forgives, though Pity's self be nigh,
The time-tried wretch that mocks his prophecy!
" But Heaven is not forgetful. God is just;
God weighs in mercy's scale our erring dust.
This may *he* find, whose ashes there await
The last sad rite that sorrow pays to fate.
Ye knew him when no insect's gauzy wing
More lightly flutter'd o'er the blooms of spring
Than he, with thoughtless smile, and sunny eye,
O'er every leaf and stalk of vanity,
That poison-breathing plant, with flaunting flower,
Which loves to desecrate the fairest bower.
What now avail thy sword and numerous scar,
Thou sin-slain giant, with the hand of war?
What now avails thy beauty, self-adored,
That doom'd thy lov'd one to a death abhorr'd?
Methinks her dust should *know* thee, and upbraid
Thy perjured vow, for trusting truth betray'd;
Like that relentless soul—a shaded flame—
That, in elysium, darkens at the name
Of thankless Florence! But ye both are mute;
She cannot be defiled, nor thou pollute
The worm's pale sister. Yet, in hours like this,
Most eloquent, O Death, thy silence is!
And wordless truth, when seated on thy brow,
Proclaims—and is believed—that sin is wo!
" Was it not wo, when all-shunn'd Henley fled
From every human eye?—to hide his head
Where living thing ne'er shook a leaf, nor stirred
The honey'd flower, save startled humming bird?
Where never sound disturb'd the horrid brake,
Save thrilling warning of the rattlesnake?
And ne'er to heaven was raised a glittering eye,
Except the slow-winged eagle's in the sky?"
" Abhorr'd by all, he fled, yet not alone;
Senena's faithful dog, with ceaseless moan,
Follow'd his parting steps. Though oft driven back,
Spurn'd, and yet true, the dog pursued his track,
And found a welcome at his journey's end.
Senena's dog became his humble friend,
His sole companion in the dismal brake,
And soon was loved for lost Senena's sake—
The only thing on earth he now could love;
And he would seat him in the tulip-grove
And gaze in silence on the terrier's face,
Till day, from morn to eve, had run his race.
Unsocial savage! far from human sight—
From human sound, he urged his gloomy flight,
To rest on solitude his blasted breast;
Farthest from man, the loneliest spot was best;
Where sound was not, save ocean's distant roar,
And motion, save the billows on the shore.
The desert beckon'd to his mute despair;
And if he was alone, what matter where?
He loved to sit on crags, and hear the sound
Of his loud rifle shake the waste around;
Leaping from rock to rock, from wood to wood,
O'er isthmus, isle, and long-resounding flood.
And had not midnight to his lone retreat,
Through starless darkness led my wandering feet,
There, where he died, ' without a hand to save,'
There would the wolf, beside the dashing wave,
Have given his shroudless limbs a living grave.
" Foot-sore, and weary, and in soul distress'd,
I was returning from the travell'd west:
The night was gloom unbroken; and I lost
My way amid the many paths that cross'd
The dangerous forest. Long and far I went
Still more and more astray, and vainly sent
My voice for help through echoing gloom abroad.
At last a red light from a lone abode
Flash'd through the kindling verdure. Vast and high
The building darken'd on the starless sky.
Deserted and all-tenantless it seem'd;
And yet the brightness of a pine-fire gleam'd
Wide from the centre of the ample floor.
Apart I stood, and through the open door
Survey'd awhile in fear that vault-like room:
Its vast retiring depth was lost in gloom.

I spoke—I shouted: from disturb'd repose,
Behind the fire, a startled wretch arose,
Casting his lengthen'd shadow far aloof,
That, like a spell-raised giant, propp'd the roof;
And, lighted from below, his features wan
Seem'd such as fear would not ascribe to man.
Like a stray'd captive by his gaolor found,
His terror utter'd a despairing sound,
While fast he grasp'd, with both his hands, his hair,
Gazing on darkness with a murderer's stare.
Thick o'er his brow one raven lock was roll'd,
And at his feet Senena's terrier howl'd.
Slow I advanced; but, with averted look,
And arms out-stretch'd, he shrank—then stood and shook:
An infant might have fell'd him with a flower;
For she, whom he had wrong'd in evil hour,
Was present to his soul with dread and might;
One, one wild thought absorb'd his spirit quite.
Faintly he said, 'I have expected thee;
Come, let me kiss thy child, and cease to be!'
But when I named his hapless name, and grasp'd
His rugged hand, with thickening throat he gasp'd;
He look'd—and seem'd to fear to look again;
And torturing memory rush'd into his brain.
But when he saw the bright tear on my cheek,
And when I bade God help him, accents weak
Of thanks half-utter'd trembled on his tongue;
Faint on my agitated arm he hung:
The voice of kindness, mighty to subdue,
Fell on his soften'd soul like heavenly dew;
And when I pray'd for him, his *heart* look'd up;
Hope faintly brighten'd in his bitter cup;
He kneel'd, he kiss'd my feet, he sobb'd, he wept,
And nearer to his guest the terrier crept.
"And oft—his only visitor—I sought
The hermit of the desert; for I thought
That He, who died for all, might yet impart
The grace that passeth utterance to his heart;
And alteration in his eye to me
Seem'd heaven-sent hope, and growing piety.
But weak and weaker hourly he became;
More frequent tremors shook his faded frame;
A deadly hectic flush'd his fallen cheek;
His voice was changed to treble, small and weak;
Pain in his eye subdued th' expression wild—
The Misanthrope was gentle as a child;
And he complain'd that oft the light was green,
That blue sparks girt his bed, in darkness seen,
And that the rushes on the floor had wings,
And moved, and flew, like animated things.
Then would he mourn his nights unbless'd with sleep,
And bend his face upon my knee and weep,
And say that he had wished in vain to die;
And that (although he shrunk when death seem'd nigh)
Oft had he gazed upon the heaving main,
And long'd to leap, and turn'd, and look'd again.
But if I pray'd him to return with me,
Then, like a wretch who strives with agony,
And deeply maim'd, prepares his final blow,
He muster'd up his strength, and answer'd 'No!'
Once, only once, his anguish sank in pray'r,
And utter'd all a broken heart's despair:—
'In doubt I lived, in horror I expire;
Release me, O release me! in thine ire;
Or in thy mercy, Father, set me free!
For my eyes hate the blessed sun to see,
That only bids my hopeless spirit mourn
O'er ill-spent hours that never can return.'
"When *last* I sought his hermit-home, no smoke
Rose o'er the hemlock huge, or greener oak.
My heart misgave me as my steps drew near,
And chill I entered with foreboding fear.
No voice replied to mine; the dog had fled!
The house was tenantless, the fire was dead.
Night came in storms; and I, per force, must stay,
And wait in loneliness the coming day.
O'erwearied, soon I slept; but thunders deep
Roused me, appall'd, from unrefreshing sleep,
And the still horror of portentous dreams.
Night seem'd eternal; and the morning beams,
As if averse to chase so foul a night,
Prolong'd their slumber in the hall of light.
But when the gray-eyed morning sweetly spread
Her dappled mantle o'er the mountain's head,
I issued from my prison-house of dread.
"The sun had not yet risen. The forest threw
Gigantic darkness on the mingled hue
Of gold and crimson in the brightening sky;
The sea was fiery purple to the eye;
And o'er the waves, still warring with the gale,
The moon was shining calm, and cold, and pale.
Frown'd sea and strand, but heaven divinely smiled;
And, cheer'd, I sought the hermit in the wild.
I reach'd his wonted station on the shore;
I found him there; and to the billow's roar
He seem'd to listen from his bed of sand,
His face to heaven, his head upon his hand.
I paused—and felt at heart a deadly chill:
Did ever breathing bosom lie so still?
Wan as the ocean's foam, with unclosed eye,
As if to take his farewell of the sky,
Serene he lay in everlasting rest,
The faithful terrier pining on his breast.
"Scarce hath the lily faded on her shroud,
Since earth's cold curtain, like a friendly cloud,
Closed o'er our sinful sister! and the tear
Of dread and wo is damp upon her bier.
She did but go before him: he is here!
"Yes, fallen and hapless maiden! *he* is come,
Who sent thy nameless baby to the tomb,
And led thee forth from Paradise to weep:
In silence by thy side his dust shall sleep.
Poor sufferer! is the day of trouble past?
And have ye reach'd a sheltering port at last?
Ye pair whom death hath wedded! may ye rise
From that cold bed, redeem'd, beyond the skies
To bless Eternal Mercy, when the powers
Of sin are vanquished! But to us and our's,
Long shall your union be a mournful page,
In admonition rich: and youth and age
(Not taught like you) shall read with streaming eye
Your letter'd stone, and ponder solemnly.
Youth! wouldst thou end in wo? in guilt begin;
'*The curse of God is in the house of sin.*'
Look here, unholy Love! thy victims these:
Behold thy triumphs! thou, whose lip can freeze
The warmest bosom, blast the fairest face!
Thou who canst wed affection to disgrace,
Turn beauty's locks to horror with thy breath,
And round youth's temples bind the coronal of death!"
The earth fell heavy on the coffin'd clay
That, deep interr'd, awaits the Judgment Day.
A sudden whirlwind shook the gospel-oak;
White in the bay the booming billow broke;
And there was tumult in the lurid sky,
Red battle in the clouds; and terror's eye
Saw forms of dread through heaven's broad desert roam;
Close press'd the awe-struck crowd, and hurried home.
Even Kirk himself, who scorn'd the utter'd word,
A cold freethinker, simpering while he heard,
Felt his heart awed with new reflection now,
And thoughts unwelcome sadden'd on his brow.
O'er the cold dead broods silence, hush'd and deep,
And Henley slumbers where his victims sleep.

NOTES.

([a]) *Cold o'er thy bosom shall the earth-worm glide.*

The idea of concluding this poem with a funeral sermon was suggested to me after hearing an oration delivered by the Rev. Jacob Brettell, on the death of my early teacher, one of the most respectable of an ill-rewarded class of men—a humble schoolmaster. He was one of those unsophisticated beings whom the *improved* state of society will no longer permit to subsist among us. He was disinterestedness personified; a man of genius, of infantine kindliness, of patriarchal simplicity—the gentlest and most benevolent of living creatures. Humble, pious, industrious, and resigned, "he lived and died as few can live and die;" and his appropriate epitaph would be —"Here lies the best of men, Joseph Ramsbottom."

([b]) *But thou no more, with eye refresh'd, shalt see*
The long-watched seedling from the soil aspire.

That fondness for flowers, which has distinguished many able men, was remarkable in Joseph Ramsbottom.

([c]) *Or polyanthus, edged with golden wire.*

The distinct edge in the polyanthus is one mark of a good flower. Depth of colour is another.

([d]) *When winds of midnight play*
On that wild harp which well thy skill could frame.

Joseph Ramsbottom was at once an able mathematician and ingenious mechanic. He was in the habit of amusing his few leisure hours with the construction of various nicknacks; and, among others, the Æolian harp.

([e]) *For dire Metacom quell'd.*

Metacom, the celebrated "King Philip."

"Yet be the savage in the man forgiven."

Elliot, I am told, could not possibly have uttered this sentiment. I am, perhaps, wrong in raising him above the prejudices of the times.

"The death of Philip, in retrospect, makes different impressions from what were made at the time of the event. It was then considered as the extinction of a virulent and implacable enemy: it is now viewed as the fall of a great warrior, a penetrating statesman, and a mighty prince. It then excited universal joy and congratulation, as the prelude to the close of a merciless war: it now awakens sober reflections on the instability of empire, the peculiar destiny of the aboriginal race, and the inscrutable decrees of Heaven. The patriotism of the man was then overlooked in the cruelty of the savage! and little allowance was made for the natural jealousy of the sovereign, on account of the barbarities of the warrior. Philip, in the progress of the English settlements, foresaw the loss of his territory and the ruin of his tribe, and made one mighty effort to prevent those calamities. Our pity for his misfortunes would be still heightened, if we could rely on the tradition, that Philip, and his chief old men, were at first averse to the war; that he wept at the news of the first English who were killed; and that he was pressed into those measures by the irresistible importunity of his young warriors."—*Hubbard's Narrative.*

([f]) *Kirk, with gloomy stare,*
Perused each sun-brown'd warrior's haughty air,
And, starting, almost fear'd rebellion there.

Complaints were made to the King against Massachusets. Charles II. had not yet been proclaimed by them."—*Holmes.*

"An address to the King was agreed to, and ordered to be sent to England."—*Ibid.*

"The Court published an order the same day, forbidding disorderly behaviour on the occasion, and in a particular manner—'That no man shall presume to drink his Majesty's health, which,' the order says, 'he hath in an especial manner forbid.' This last prohibition, whatever was its origin, was very prudent. Had what was forbidden been enjoined, it might have proved too severe a test of the loyalty of the colonists—especially if what Chalmers says were strictly true, that King Charles and New England mutually hated, contemned, and feared each other during his reign, because the one suspected its principle of attachment, and the other dreaded an invasion of privileges."—*Hutchinson.*

([g]) *The moon still slumber'd o'er the gospel-oak,*
Beneath whose shade Newhaven's fathers kept
Their first sweet Sabbath.

"John Davenport, a celebrated Minister of Coleman Street, in London, accompanied by Theophilus Eaton and Edward Hopkins, merchants of London, with several other respectable persons, arrived this summer (1637) at Boston. The unmolested enjoyment of civil and religious liberty was the object of their emigration."—*Holmes.*

"Davenport, Eaton, and the rest of their company, sailed from Boston for Quinnipiac; and, in about a fortnight, arrived at the desired port. On the 18th of April they kept their first Sabbath in the placeunder a large, spreading oak, where Davenport preached to them."—*Holmes.*

"In the spring of the year, an order was given to the Lord Treasurer to take speedy and effectual course for the stay of eight ships then in the Thames, prepared to sail for New England. By this order, Oliver Cromwell, Sir Arthur Hazlerig, John Hampden, and other patriots, were prevented from coming to America. How limited the foresight of man—how inscrutable the counsels of God! By this arbitrary measure, Charles I., far from suspecting that the future revolutions of his kingdom were to be excited and directed by persons in such an humble sphere of life, forcibly detained the men destined to overturn his throne, and terminate his days by a violent death."—*Holmes.*

([h]) *While Elliot,*
Beneath the gospel-oak essay'd to speak.

"On the 28th of October, 1646, the Reverend John Elliot commenced those pious and indefatigable labours among the natives which ultimately procured for him the title of the Indian Apostle. His first visit was to the Indians of Norrantum."—*Holmes.*

"On the approach of Elliot, with three other persons, Waban, a wise and grave Indian, attended by five or six others, met him, and welcomed him and his companions into a large wigwam, where a considerable number of his countrymen attended, to hear the new doctrine. After a short prayer in English, Mr Elliot preached a sermon of an hour's length in the Indian language, and was well understood by his attentive auditory. Many of the hearers listened to the discourse with tears. Waban received religious impressions which were never afterwards lost."—*Hutchinson.*

"The Indian translation of the New Testament, by the Rev. John Elliot, was finished this year, (1661,) printed, and dedicated to Charles II."—*Holmes.*

"The Rev. John Elliot completed his translation of the Bible in the Indian language, which was now (1664) printed in Cambridge."—*Hutchinson.*

([i]) *The curse of God is in the house of sin.*

"The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked."—Prov. c. iii., v. 33.

([k]) *Rank blooms the deadly mushroom in the heart!*

The fact here alluded to is not uncommon in warm climates.

SPIRITS AND MEN.

An Epic Poem.

To James Montgomery, Esq., author of "The World Before the Flood," I dedicate in this fragment an evidence of my presumption and my despair.

PREFACE.

The world before the flood has furnished four English poets with noble subjects for poetry.

"The Paradise Lost" is totally unlike all the poetry that has followed it. Even in the controversial metaphysics of his poetry, Milton has found no rival; and although Byron, in his "Cain," has combined tenderness the most touching with a lofty sublimity, still it may be said, with truth, of the Bard of our Republic, that he has never been imitated.

Byron's "Heaven and Earth," which has furnished me with a title, is full of passages which none but he could have written; and it also affords some instances of the facility with which the noble bard could extract honey from any flower or weed, however humble. He has transcribed, almost literally, the dying words of Eugene Aram:—"What am I better than my fathers?—death is natural and necessary." He was no dramatist, but he knew how to borrow from a page which he could not have written; and in this instance he borrowed wisely. The human heart in despair furnished him with a truth which Bacon wrote long before; but Bacon wrote it unendangered and not so well.

"The Loves of the Angels" is an invaluable gem, which will rank, not with the "Elegy in a Country Churchyard," but with the "Rape of the Lock." Sometimes, indeed, we cannot help thinking that the author might have periwigged his angels with advantage. But I beg pardon—it is no longer fashionable for young coxcombs to wear wigs.

Montgomery's "World before the Flood" is deficient in action, and does not contain one well-drawn character. But the incidents are unequalled in permanent interest. Perhaps there is nothing in all poetry superior to the passage which describes the return of Cain, "When young and old went forth to meet their sire." I think the poem is too spiritual; mine, on the contrary, "is of earth, earthy." But while the eagle soars to the sun, the dog may breathe pure air on the mountains below; and, whether he be the humble friend of the beggar or the prince, still it is with man that he is familiar.

If it is asked, Why I presume to choose a subject which has already occupied all that is transcendent in genius? I answer, that I choose it for that very reason. I may reasonably think that Raphael can have no equal as a painter; but if Corregio had thought so, he could not with truth have said, "And I, too, am a painter!" Perhaps there is nothing in art which the human mind will not yet surpass, except the master-pieces of Shakspeare. What! not the sublimity of Milton? No, Milton has not surpassed Dante. But who can hope to surpass the heart-crushing pathos of Byron? Ford equalled that pathos; and who reads him? But Corregio did not surpass Raphael. True; and what then? My book, however contemptible it may be, will perhaps be better than it could have been, had I not determined to write with glorious examples before me, and in the presence, as it were, of the conquerors of Time.

A domestic critic has objected to one of the human actors in my drama of annihilation, that his actions will be opposed to his nature. But habit is a second nature, which sometimes supersedes the first, as the retouchings of a dauber can amend into discord the silent eloquence of a fine painting. In representing Baalath as naturally one of the best and noblest of human beings, my intention is to shew how the exercise of despotic power perverts such natures, and compels us to reap from them calamity, instead of blessing.

I have also been seriously warned, that some of my characters are unscriptural, and therefore improper. I hope they are not liable to this objection. The characters alluded to are four. The one most blamed is Timna, the spirit of Abel; in whom I have wished to personify that power which is called genius. No fact being better established than that every great improvement in the condition of the human race may be traced to some mechanical invention, much of the interest of the story is founded on this fact, and on the meetings of Timna with his brother Cain, who, under the name of Shemeber, wanders homeless on the earth, deploring and suffering the consequences of his crime, yet doomed to die only with the world in which he became the first homicide. I am also blamed for giving virtues to Iambres, one of the fallen angels. Formed for incessant action, it was once his office and his delight to accompany and control the comets in their courses; but doomed, for his revolt, to watch the gates of Eden, he steals thence, at times, to gaze unseen on the widowed Zillah, whom he loves with a pure and passionate affection, and to whose lifeless form he clings in despair, when it floats on the waters which have entombed man and his works. But the great fault of my subject is, I confess, the supposed necessity of destroying the world, in consequence of the wickedness of its inhabitants. Did the Creator do his work imperfectly? He could, or he could not, have prevented the catastrophe. After all, this is the great metaphysical difficulty, founded on the existence of evil, into which all other difficulties resolve themselves, when we attempt, with our limited faculties, to unveil the inscrutable. It is, however, a difficulty which must be met—it cannot be evaded: I have, therefore, endeavoured to represent, in the character of Joel, Christ the Creator and future Redeemer, first trying to avert, and then with almost human sympathy deploring the inevitable ruin of the work of his hands. For part of this conception, I have the poetical authority of Milton; and it is not, I hope, though I am told it is, theologically objectionable.

SPIRITS AND MEN.

BOOK I.

I sing of men and angels, and the days
When God repented him that he had made
Man on the earth; when crimes alone won praise;
When the few righteous were with curses paid,
And none seem'd vile as they whom truth betray'd;
Till hope despair'd her myriad sons to save,
And giant sin fill'd up their universal grave.

But these—are these the flowers of Paradise,
That bloom'd when man before his Maker stood
Off'ring his sinless thoughts in sacrifice?—
Flowers, ye remind me of rock, vale, and wood,
Haunts of my early days, and still lov'd well:
Bloom not your sisters fair in Locksley's dell?

And where the sun, o'er purple moorlands wide,
Gilds Wharncliffe's oaks, while Don is dark below?
And where the blackbird sings on Rother's side?
And where Time spares the age of Conisbro'?—
Sweet flowers, remember'd well! your hues, your breath,
Call up the dead to combat still with death:
The spirits of my buried years arise!
Again a child, where childhood rov'd I run;
While groups of speedwell, with their bright blue eyes,
Like happy children, cluster in the sun.
Still the wan primrose hath a golden core;
The millfoil, thousand-leaf'd, as heretofore,
Displays a little world of flow'rets gray;
And tiny maids might hither come to cull
The wo-mark'd cowslip of the dewy May;
And still the fragrant thorn is beautiful.
I do not dream! Is it, indeed, a rose
That yonder in the deep'ning sunset glows?
Methinks the orchis of the fountain'd wold
Hath, in its well-known beauty, something new.
Do I not know thy lofty disk of gold,
Thou, that still woo'st the sun, with passion true?
No, splendid stranger! haply, I have seen
One not unlike thee, but with humbler mien,
Watching her lord. O lily, fair as aught
Beneath the sky! thy pallid petals glow
In evening's blush; but evening borrows nought
Of thee, thou rival of the stainless snow—
For thou art scentless. Lo! this finger'd flower,
That round the cottage window weaves a bower,
Is not the woodbine; but that lowlier one,
With thick green leaves, and spike of dusky fire,
Enamour'd of the thatch it grows upon,
Might be the house leek of rude Hallamshire,
And would awake, beyond divorcing seas,
Thoughts of green England's peaceful cottages.
Yes, and this blue-eyed child of earth, that bends
Its head on leaves with liquid diamonds set,
A heavenly fragrance in its sighing sends;
And though 'tis not our downcast violet,
Yet might it, haply, to the zephyr tell
That 'tis belov'd by village maids as well.
Thou little, dusky, crimson-bosom'd bird,
Starting, but not in fear, from tree to tree!
I never erst thy plaintive love-notes heard,
Nor hast thou been a suppliant erst to me
For table crumbs, when winds bow'd branch and stem,
And leafless twigs form'd winter's diadem:—
No, thou art not the bird that haunts the grange,
Storm-pinch'd, with bright black eyes and breast of flame.
I look on things familiar, and yet strange,
Known, and yet new, most like, yet not the same;
I hear a voice, ne'er heard before, repeat
Songs of the past. But Nature's voice is sweet,
Wherever heard; her works, wherever seen,
Are might and beauty to the mind and eye;
To the lone heart, though oceans roll between,
She speaks of things that but with life can die;
And while, above the thundering Gihon's foam,
That cottage smokes, my heart seems still at home,
In England still—though there no mighty flood
Sweeps, like a foaming earthquake, from the clouds;
But still in England, where rock-shading wood
Shelters the peasant's home, remote from crowds,
And shelter'd once as noble hearts as e'er
Dwelt in th' Almighty's form, and knew nor guilt, nor fear.

How like an eagle, from his mile-high rock,
Down sweeps the Gihon, smitten into mist
On groaning crags, that, thunder-stunn'd, resist
The headlong thunder, and eternal sho'k,
Where, far below, like ages with their deeds,
The wat'ry anarchy doth foam and sweep!
Now wing'd with light, which winged gloom succeeds;
Now beautiful as hope, or wild and deep
As fate's last mystery; now swift and bright
As human joy, then black as horror's night!
And high above the torrent, yet how near,
The cottage of the woodman, Thamar, stands,
Gazing afar, where Enoch's towers appear,
And distant hills, that look on farther lands.
Beautiful cottage! breathe thy air of balm,
Safe as a sleeping cloud, when heaven is calm!
Smile, like an exiled patriot, on the bed
Of death, with not a friend to close his eyes!—
Smile in the brightness of the sunset red,
On all that pride strives vainly to despise!
Beautiful cottage! with an earnest tear,
My soul hath sworn, grief never entered here.
Have I then found on earth the long-sought heav'n,
Where man's associate, Sorrow, never came?
Where humbled sin ne'er wept to be forgiven,
And falsehood's cheek ne'er blush'd with truth and shame?
Alas! lone cottage of the mountain's brow!
All that wan grief can teach thine inmates know.
I look upon the world before the flood
That vainly swept a sinful race away:—
Vainly, if tyrants still disport in blood;
If they who toil are still the spoiler's prey;
If war, waste, want, rebellion, now, as then,
Rave over nations, grown in folly gray;
And earth, beneath the feet of hopeless men,
Still groaning, cries, "Redemption cometh!"—
When?
O World before the Flood! thou answer'st not,
Though, still importunate, I question thee!
Shall I, then, paint thee, as thou seem'st afar,
Seen through the mist of years, a moral blot,
Too like the world that is, and long may be?
Spirits and men! Spirits that were and are!
Though worlds grow old in darkness, I will write
The drama of your deeds, with none to aid,
And none to praise my song; not ill repaid
E'en by the pleasing labour of my choice;
And, haply, not in vain I lift my voice,
Intent to teach the future by the past,
If truth, like death, long shunn'd, is met at last.

Yes, lonely cottage of the mountain's brow!
All that wan grief can teach thine inmates know;
For on thy humble pallet Thamar sleeps,
And Zillah dares not hope he yet will wake;
Pale, with her children, by his side she weeps.
Yet, yet he shall revive, and speak, and take
A last farewell of her, so true and dear,
Who watches him in hope—ah, no! in fear!—
The victim of a dungeon's heavy breath,
And the rack's torture; doom'd in youth to death,
Because he dar'd, with millions tame too long,
To murmur at misrule too long endur'd;
Six years chain'd down in Enoch's dungeons strong;
Releas'd by seeming mercy, yet secur'd
By cunning vengeance, while it but set free
The thrall which death had marked for liberty.
Unconscious of all strife, he struggles now;
But Zillah feels the pang that knits his brow.
Oh, how intensely still she bends above
The sire of children not yet fatherless!
Did not his lip, his bosom, feebly move?
Did he not faintly sigh? O happiness!

He breathes—for her he looks (but long in vain)
Who would not quit for worlds that scene of pain ;
And she bends o'er him speechless. How he tries
To utter her dear name ! Strong spasms control
His tongue ; but while the half-formed accent dies,
His eyes meet her's, and soul is mix'd with soul ;
A thousand thoughts, the feelings of long years,
Are mingled in wild joy that hath no words, no tears !

Words came, at length, and tears were wildly shed.
"I die at home, and thou art here," he said ;
"But though, releas'd, I die at home, and feel
Thy warm tears, Zillah, on my bosom cold,
Think not that aught but fire can soften steel,
Or that, in pity, wolves relax their hold.
Oh, I have dream'd of vollied seas, and fire,
Sad retribution, haply, yet to be !
The tyrant's power and will obey a higher ;
And vain is human strife with destiny.
Know, from thy womb the destin'd twain have sprung,
On whom the fate of this doom'd world is hung.
O may their deeds, magnanimous and just,
Cancel the crimes of ages, and retrieve
The fainting hopes of man, when I am dust !—
For I must leave thee, Eva ! I must leave
Thee, my brave boy ! your sire is summon'd hence
To join Mahali, whom his innocence
Could not defend or rescue ; if, indeed,
My ill-starr'd father lives not yet fast bound
In torturing dungeons, whose slow pangs exceed
All other pangs. But, ah ! what mists surround
My swimming brain !—what means this sudden gloom ?
Take not my children from me ere I die !
I cannot see your faces, nearer come,
Irad, yet nearer. Eva, art thou nigh ?
Zillah, thy hand—my poor, ill-fated one !
I see a shade, resembling thee—'tis gone !"

He ended, and with closing eyes, that seem'd
Unwillingly to veil their orbs, bereav'd
Of that fair form, on which their last glance beam'd,
Sank into gentlest slumber, unperceived.
But still she listen'd, still gazed on the clay
That, mocking life, yet mute as marble lay ;
And watch'd his darkening paleness in despair.
He died in manhood's prime, nor had slow pain
Marr'd all his manly beauty ; no gray hair
Reproach'd his auburn locks. Could she refrain
From cruel hope ? Ah, yes : she stooping stood,
And felt in all its wo her widowhood.
She ask'd no wings, to bear her soul above,
Although her dream of earthly bliss was o'er ;
But on the lips, that smil'd in lifeless love,
She press'd a lip, which thenceforth smil'd no more.
She stood like Sorrow watching on a tomb.
The beauteous wo, that charm'd like shaded light,
The cheek, yet young, that knew no youthful bloom,
Well suited her dark brow and forehead white ;
And in the sad endurance of her eye
Was all that love believes of woman's majesty.

Could such a pair as this be born to bring
Creatures of toil into a world of wo ?—
From such a stock undying patriots spring,
As Enoch's rebel-lord too soon may know ;
For long misrule prepares the dreadful way
Of him who brings to Baalath dismay.
While at her mother's side pale Eva bends,
And mourns her sire, with soul-appalling cries,
Even now, the son of lifeless Thamar sends
Half-utter'd threats of vengeance with his sighs.
He longs to snatch the jav'lin from the wall ;
In age a boy, in soul a man, and tall
Beyond his years, his weeping eyes flash fire :
He feels within what power assails in vain ;
His sobs repeat the last words of his sire ;
He sees but Thamar's wrongs, Mahali's chain !
Man of the future ! thou wilt do or die,
And deathless is thy wish, "Revenge and liberty !"

Midnight was past. The children of the dead
Slept :—but the widow kiss'd his stiff'ning form,
Laid out his limbs, and wept ; then o'er him threw
Her snowy bridal robe, and, like a worm,
Sank on his breast, convolv'd, but not in pain.
Lo ! when she wak'd to thought and grief again,
A beauteous blue-ey'd youth before her stood,
With golden ringlets, and an angel's grace,
And all the sweetness of the fair and good,
And more than mortal sorrow in his face !
On his young cheek th' unfaded rose was white,
And from his sodden hair the rain of night
Dripp'd. "Give me shelter till the morn," he cried,
"I'm tir'd and cold."
Zillah. Whence com'st thou, pallid one ?
Timna. From Eden's forest, where the spectres glide.
Zil. Where is thy home ?
Tim. In heaven ! or I have none.
Zil. Where are thy parents ?
Tim. Here no love-taught bird
Is motherless like me. But thou hast heard
My father whisper ! and it shakes th' abode
Of the archangels,
Zil. Tell me, hast thou, then,
No friends ?
Tim. Yes, many friends ; the great, good God,
The sinless spirits, and all righteous men.
Zil. Where dwell'st thou ?
Tim. Everywhere. By summer floods
I sleep. I am the guest of all the woods,
And dine in caves that give the viper birth ;
The clouds look on me from the hurried sky,
(They know their homeless brother of the earth ;)
And all the winds accost me as they fly,
Still wandering with me through the desert, glad.
Zil. Who art thou ?
Tim. I am Timna, call'd the sad,
Because fond mothers still are doom'd to see
Their most unhappy sons resemble me ;—
Timna, at whose approach dull spirits flee ;
Who sits beneath the roof of amethyst,
And treads the spacious, mountain-broider'd floor :
From courts and palaces, with scorn dismiss'd,
Nor always welcom'd by the friendless poor ;
But all the children of the forest know
The leveret's playmate, the lark's bed-fellow.

Instinctively the wond'ring widow took
The fragment of a loaf, her precious hoard,
Down from its shelf, and pausing, with a look
Of thoughtful sadness, laid it on the board.
"Nay," said the youth, "I want not food, but rest !"
Then bounded into bed, and slept on Irad's breast.
But Zillah slept not. Till the morning broke,
She watch'd, in desolation and despair,
Senseless to all but wo. The guardian oak
Moan'd o'er the roof it shelter'd ; the thick air
Labour'd with doleful sounds ; the night-bird shriek'd
Thrice ; the expiring embers harshly creak'd ;
And with strange boom mourn'd Gihon's bordering wood,
Heard faintly ; while upon the hearth-stone gray,
The cricket of the world before the flood
Bounded unseen. But when the infant day

(While the low casement's leaves and flowers all shook
In the fresh breeze) darted a bright'ning look
On the poor cottage, and, with rosy beam,
Lit up into a smile the features pale
Of the stiff corse, she started, with a scream,
Like one who feels the earth beneath him fail;
For, like a sweet but gather'd flower, life seem'd
To linger yet with silence and decay.
But on dark orbs the golden morning beam'd;
And on the dead the lifeless blush still lay
So fair, so life-like, that despair was fain—
No, not to hope, but yet to weep again.
She wept, she look'd—and, lo! her children rose
Companionless! "Where is the pensive one,
Who, on my Irad's breast, in sweet repose,
Lay like a flower?" The stranger youth was gone!
Zillah, in fear and wonder, gazed around;
But Timna, the lost wanderer, was not found.
"Then hath a vision, beautiful as truth,
Deceived thee, Zillah, in the shadowy night?
Was it a dream? and did no angel youth,
Shake from his dripping hair the liquid light,
And utter unimaginable things?
Came he, indeed, like a strange bird, whose wings
Blaze with unearthly hues, that on the mind
Cast a bewildering glare? Or doth mine eye
See forms, to which untroubled hearts are blind?"
Perplex'd, and wonder-stricken, silently
She ponder'd thus; while, through the open door
Swift Irad ran t'wards Gihon's wooded shore,
Not without purpose; for, amid the trees,
As from the heights his rapid way he bent,
His bright curls trembling backward from the breeze,
He saw the wondrous youth, and, wond'ring, went
To meet him. Hand in hand, along the lawn,
Lovely alike, they came. A lifeless fawn
Upon the board the graceful stranger threw;
Laid on the floor his quiver and his bow;
Dash'd from his bare and snowy feet the dew;
Strok'd back the golden ringlets from his brow;
And look'd like morn, "with eyes of azure light."
"Know ye," he said, "the wanderer of the night?
Lo! he who feeds the wren, hath sent ye food!
Behold the hunter, who, in darkness finds
Paths only trod by spirits of the wood,
And knows the secrets of the waves and winds!
Me—as the seraphim and cherubim,
Who serve whom they adore, have need of him,
As I of him who sent me—ye will need.
Strength is vouchsafed thee, mother! strength, to cope
With earth and hell; and he, from whom proceed
All perfect gifts, bids thee endure in hope.
O my sweet Irad! I will shew thee all
The wonders of the forest walks; and we
Will hear the sky-invading mountains call
On God, in thunder. Wilt thou hunt with me?
Oft will we chase the deer o'er dazzling snow
Above the clouds; and thou shalt bear my bow.
Last night, methought that I was borne, with thee,
Beyond the gorgeous rainbow, through the cold,
Blue air, star-high, above a cloudy sea;
When, lo! bright waves of glass, with foreheads bold,
Like towers of light, in majesty arose,
Or like earth's mountains, but more vast than those:
Now, mute as mountains in their hoods of snow;
Now, like ten thousand Gihons, crush'd and riven,
And shatter'd into darkness by one blow
Of deafening fire, from end to end of heav'n.
O do not thou despise the dreams of sleep!
Dreams come from God, and oft have meanings deep.
But know'st thou, boy, that I interpret dreams?
I will interpret mine, when tir'd we lie
On some bare rock, amid the cloudless beams
Of the lone sun, while, midway in the sky,
Forms, such as live in heav'n-sent visions bright,
Are dash'd, at once, from glory into night.
But righteous deeds can wash out crimes; and ye,
The last of Abel's race, are arm'd with power
To wing with gloom or light the destin'd hour;
To call down vengeance from the starless sky,
Or quench in joy the wide world's misery."

Inspired or mad the fervid wanderer wrought
Faith in his hearers. Zillah wept aloud,
In joy and grief, and marvell'd, when she thought
Of Thamar's dying words. Humbly she bow'd
Her head in silent prayer; while Timna's face
Was clasp'd to Irad's heart, in friendship's first embrace.

No friendly neighbour, in his sad attire,
Came to see Thamar in his last home laid:
Who sooth'd the children? Who bewail'd the sire?—
All shunn'd the house proscrib'd. But Eber made,
Beneath the loftiest tree that crown'd the steep,
His brother's narrow bed of lasting sleep,
And hallow'd it with curses: low and dread,
He mutter'd threats of vengeance o'er the dead.
No solemn priest the ritual grand intoned;
No mournful bell toll'd far the doom of all;
But o'er his lifeless form Affection moan'd,
And kings might envy Thamar's funeral:
Borne to the grave by all he lov'd in life,
Around him wept, son, daughter, brother, wife!
And Timna rais'd the sweetest voice that e'er
Was heard beneath the azure canopy:—
"Rest, wo-worn man, that knew'st nor crime, nor fear!
Sweet after toil is rest. Thou now art free,
Enfranchis'd slave! Full well thy task is done;
Although the fateful work is but begun!"

Then all was silent, save the deep-drawn sigh
And bursting sob. But soon strange sounds were heard
That rous'd the echoes; and, approaching nigh,
The sun-bright car of Baalath appear'd, [rein,
Drawn by six out-stretch'd steeds, that scorn'd the
O'er which th' affrighted driver shriek'd in vain.
Groaning, with shaken forelock, each swift horse
Shot from his eyes the shiver'd light abroad,
Couch'd close his ears, and in his sightless course,
Beat up the thunder from the granite road:
Wild as the foam of Gihon, backward stream'd
The toss of frighted manes: the pale slaves scream'd
In terror for their lord. All stooping low—
With bloody whip and spur—all follow'd fast;
And power-adoring Jared, hopeless now,
Pursued the fluctuating car, aghast,
Yet resolute with Baalath to die.
The king alone, though not to danger blind,
Sate unappall'd in kingly dignity;
He only worthy seem'd to rule mankind.
Like brandish'd torches, steeds and chariot flash'd,
Like rushing flames, along the rugged path;
And, lo! th' unsleeping height, whence Gihon dash'd
From rock to rock, a giant in his wrath!
Still, onward, onward steeds and chariot blazed;
The mourners started from their wo and gazed!
But at that moment, from the depth sublime,
A man arose, gray-hair'd, of thoughtful mien;
Gray-hair'd, and yet no pencil-mark of time
On his fresh cheek, or lofty brow, was seen:

He, rising, like the spirit of the flood,
Said to the frantic steeds, "Stand!" and they stood.
Jared again breath'd freely; and all eyes
Look'd on the stranger. There was in his face
Terrible beauty. Something of the skies
Seem'd mix'd up with his clay; a heavenly grace
Awed in his action. Young, to every eye,
Yet old he seem'd; as if eternity
Had felt the weight of years; or gloom and light,
Deathless and coincarnate, mov'd and spoke;
A human presence, with a spirit's might,
That was ere death was—yea, ere morning broke
On lands where life was not, save life that fear'd
Nor shroud, nor worm. As when heaven's fire hath sear'd
The early verdure of a giant wood,
Thron'd on the mountains; still the living shade
Renews its pride, though smitten: so he stood—
Like placid Jove, in marble undecay'd,
Gazing on time, with death-defying eye,
And throning on his brow divinity.

The king descended from the arrested car;
The monarch was forgotten in the man;
And, as a friend with friend familiar,
Swift to embrace that form divine, he ran,
And shook his calm preserver by the hand;
Then, turning coldly, he resum'd the king,
And, pausing, spoke:—"But if an angel's wing
Had swept us from the abyss, and on the land
Plac'd us in safety, still we could have said
But this—that, everywhere, the royal head
Hath heavenly guardians. Man, what is thy name?"
Joel. My name is Joel.
Baalath. Well, so let it be.
But not, perchance, the exile!—No?
Joel. The same.
Baalath. No more an exile, then—I pardon thee.
Now, ask a boon, and, on my royal word,
It shall be thine.
Joel. Let Enoch's flatter'd lord,
For once, hear truth. This is the boon I crave.
Baalath. Who yet e'er lied to Baalath, and wore
His head a fortnight? The presumptuous slave!
Well, let us hear, what kings ne'er heard before,
That slaves are grateful. When?—e'en when thou wilt.

He smil'd, and yet his right hand sought the hilt
Of his keen sword. Smiling, he turn'd away,
To hide the rage that shook his inmost soul;
And, while the mourners linger'd yet, to pay
The debt of love and grief, with troubled scowl
Approach'd them, followed by his guards. He stood
Beside the grave; he trembled, and the blood
Rush'd to his heart. "Widow! I come too late,
And yet I came to pardon and to save;
But all men, kings themselves, must bow to fate.
I cannot call thy husband from the grave;
But I would dry thy tears. Behold in me
Thy king and friend: not destitute is she
On whom the royal condescension turns
An eye of favour. With a doubting frown,
Thy son beholds me. In his bosom burns
The spirit that I like. Though born a clown,
Yet if a clown he die, be his the blame.
I will advance him to the height of fame,
Honour, and wealth; and Eva shall repair
To Enoch's marble halls. She was not born
To waste her sweetness on the desert air."
Zillah look'd up; but sorrow conquer'd scorn.
She tried to speak; but her lip, quivering, fell.
Then in sweet tones, but deep and terrible,
Timna, like truth denouncing guilt, address'd
Th' astonished son of Hamath the severe.
"Thou bane and terror of a land oppress'd!
King by thy sire's successful treason, hear!
Too soon, dost thou forget what causes laid
Methuliel at a subject's feet, betray'd!
That evil comes of evil, multiplied
Still by its increase, till endurance fling
His burden at the feet of tyrant pride,
And vengeance, hallowed by long suffering,
Arraying havock under all the sky,
Wo's dreadful cure is its enormity!
Pleas'd with thy people's bane, thy law of force,
Thou gazest smiling on a realm undone,
And know'st not that thou gazest on a corse,
Whose features swell and redden in the sun,
While the worms' motion, in their hungry strife,
Makes an abhorr'd caricature of life.
See where, unseen, their loathsome feast they share!
See!—why wilt thou not see that death is there?
But, last of Cain's blind race, thou worse than blind,
Hark! there are whispers in the boding wind!
Thy victims bid me speak their murderer's doom.
Truth, told to thee, shall be to thee a lie,
And falsehood truth. Friendship and love shall bloom
Like venomous flowers to thee: thy jaundic'd eye,
Hating their innocence, shall gloat on weeds;
For cherish'd foes shall rule thee and thy deeds;
And thou on Danger's lap thy rest shall take,
Till, thunder-stunn'd, thou wake aghast, to gaze
On lightnings that the earth's deep centre shake;
Then rush, for very dread, into the blaze—
Dead, with a single shriek! while all who hear
That one wild yell die also—kill'd by fear."
He spoke; and Eva swoon'd on Timna's breast,
And Baalath turn'd black with jealous ire;
Avenging furies tore his heart unbless'd,
And sear'd his frantic veins with poison'd fire.
Mute stood the guards; on them a new light broke,
And slumb'ring mischief in their souls awoke,
While Jared from the scabbard flash'd his sword,
And Timna smil'd, like faith, to die prepared;
But Baalath's commanding nod restor'd
To Jared's thigh the weapon rashly bared.
"Wo's words," he said, "like swords, are blind and sharp:
We ask not music from a broken harp.
Our visit is ill-tim'd." He spoke, and turn'd,
And climb'd his chariot, while his humbled pride
Felt that a despot in his vitals burn'd
Who fear'd not kings. Then down the mountain's side,
And through the glens, with flowers and verdure gay,
T'wards Enoch's thousand towers he wound his way.
Beyond the valleys, and their hermit streams,
Far on the mountain-girded plain they shone,
Above the smoky ocean, which the beams
Of evening painted. Gihon flow'd alone,
Unseen, beneath the hated curtain deep,
Where deeds were done "that made the angels weep."
While they beheld, in heav'nly sadness bow'd,
That wilderness of homes, that desert of the crowd.

THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

To Henry Brougham, Esq., the Friend of the Poor, and the Champion of Education, as a humble Tribute of Respect and Gratitude for his efforts in the great cause of Humanity, this tale of Enoch Wray (the incarnation of a century) is dedicated by the Author.

PREFACE.

I am called, as I expected to be, an unsuccessful imitator of the pauper-poetry of Wordsworth; although, with the exception of his great work, I never read his writings, until long after this poem was first printed. I might be truly called an unfortunate imitator of Crabbe—that most British of poets, for he has long been bosomed with me; and if he had never lived, it is quite possible that I might never have written pauper-poetry. However, my imitation fails, if it fail, not because it is servile, nor because I have failed to stamp my own individuality upon it, but because my pencil wants force, though it is dipped in sadness and familiar with shadow. The clerical artist works with a wire-brush; but he has been unjustly blamed for the stern colours in which he paints the sublimity of British wretchedness. In what other manner could a true poet have depicted the blessedness of ultra-taxation, bread-monopoly, and their inevitable result—the beautiful battle of ten dogs for one bone? Wordsworth has coloured similar objects differently! True; but Wordsworth only meets his subject half-way, and with his hinder-end towards it. "Sly is the look which, o'er his back, that wary poet throws." Crabbe, on the contrary, takes his hideous mistress in his arms, and she rewards his confidence in her, by telling him all her dreadful secrets. The severity of his style is an accident, belonging, not to him, but to the majesty of his unparalleled subject. Hence it is, that the unhappy people of the United States of America cannot bear to read Crabbe. They think him unnatural, and he is so to them; for in their wretched country, cottagers are not paupers! marriage is not synonymous with misery! partridge-shooting is not religion to the elect! But I write for Englishmen, and every true Briton ought to buy my goods. I may be presumptuous, but, I hope, not unpardonably so, in imitating those great modern masters of song, whom Homer probably copied in his "Swineherds and Good Peasants." If my composition smell of the workshop and the dingy warehouse, I cannot help it; soot is soot; and he who lives in a chimney will do well to take the air when he can, and ruralize now and then, even in imagination. But we are cursed with evils infinitely worse than a sooty atmosphere. We are bread-taxed. Our labour, our skill, our profits, our hopes, our lives, our children's souls are bread-taxed. Should we not be better without agriculture altogether than bread-taxed as we are? Should we not have cheaper bread and more of it; higher profits, and wages that would purchase a larger quantity of food, by, at least, one-third? Why should we toil for an arithmetical ratio of food, and a geometrical ratio of misery and crime? The bread-tax-eaters tell us openly that we have, and shall have no alternative but extinction, or the lowest food that will support life; for they can breed any number of Irish savages, to take the places, and mock the graves, of those who go childless to their God, leaving behind them his best blessings rejected! If we will furnish the moral restraint, they will furnish the demoralization. What signifies it, that rather than go to the Workhouse, we pawn our furniture for Saturday's wages; and half our tools, that, with the other half, we may furnish a few goods for Saturday's market? What signifies it that we are men, possessed of heads and hands, and that we use them more industriously than any other people on the face of the earth? What signify these things, if we are compelled by the law to labour for the winds? Are we, indeed, men? If we were men like our fathers, the men of our Republic, the corn-laws would long ago have raised up Hampdens, and Sidneys, and a Daniel O'Connell in every parish. Either we must have no corn-laws or no trade. They cost us, as a direct tax, more than £80,000,000 sterling a-year, and indirectly, perhaps, as much more. According to the advocates of the landed interest, who will not be suspected of telling lies against themselves, the annual value of all the agricultural produce of Great Britain and Ireland, at the bread-tax price, is £250,000,000. Now, the corn-laws not only raise the price of corn, but, in the same ratio, that of all other agricultural products, to the last bit of beef, the last potato, and the last turnip-top. We are not compelled to eat turnip-tops yet; but if it cannot be denied that the corn-laws have raised the price of wheat from, at least, 40s. per quarter, to at least 60s.—or 33 per cent. on the gross—it follows inevitably, that 33 per cent. on £250,000,000, is £82,500,000 to a farthing. If, then, the yearly cost of the corn-laws, as a direct tax, is £80,000,000, and, as an indirect tax, as much more, they cost us in all £160,000,000, or thrice as much as all the other taxes together! Thus, the agriculturists, compelled by the law to work against us, instead of working with us, not only neutralize their own value, but that of an equal number of other persons. The land-owners are destroying pounds, that they may steal sixpences. If we saw a brewer ordering two of his servants to pump ale into a cooler, and, at the same time, ordering another servant to pump that ale out of the cooler into the street, we should say to ourselves—"this is a comical way of brewing!" we should think the brewer a very silly person, and we should tell him that he was paying the wages of three men for the work of one, and wasting the ale beside; but we should also see before us an exact picture of bread-taxed England at this moment! We, the vast majority, 12,000,000 of manufacturers and tradesmen, are trying to fill the cooler, while the minority, the 4,000,000 of agriculturists, are throwing the ale out of the cooler into the street! This state of things cannot last much longer; and if it could, why should it? By suffering the agriculturists still to work against us, we shall not save them from ruin, but all will be impoverished together. They, for their villanous submission to a law which is as hostile to them as to those whom they know they are robbing, will deserve their fate. The time, indeed, is coming, when the farmers themselves will rise as one man against the corn-laws; but it will then be too late; they will have beggared their customers. England in that day, will be an ocean of blood and horror, with only one star shining over it in the death-black firmament—the star of DEMOCRACY. The farmers will perish, the great merchants will perish, the great manufacturers will perish, without a struggle; and all the land-owners will perish, but like

pirates or madmen, crying, "Battle, to the water's edge, and then cling to the planks!" So tyrants perish, involving the innocent in their destruction. But all will not perish. There is a ship that will ride safely over the tremendous billows, and outlive the storm; I mean, the indestructible ship of the COMMONALTY. That ship cannot perish.

> "Princes and lords may flourish or may fade,
> A breath can make them, as a breath hath made;"

but the people are eternal. If, then, we were like our enemies, if we were men of violence and blood, as they say we are—should we try to save them from destruction? But we are not men of violence and blood; we are men of peace, of thought, and of labour; professing, and worthy to profess, the religion of that greatest reformer, who died for being a reformer—the meek and peaceful Jesus. Let us then endeavour to prevent the realization of a catastrophe which the imagination itself dares not contemplate. Let us save the land-owners against their will, even though they reward us for it with the fate of the Gracchi. Them, the Roman nobility murdered; they then monopolized the soil, and oppressed and unsouled the people, until, at length, the barbarians of the north and south trampled on a degenerate empire. Even so, if the corn-laws continue, shall we be trampled under foot, by other than domestic barbarians, living in palaces, and riding in coroneted coaches! Already the modern Huns possess the key of Europe. What will our bread-tax-eaters give them next? The Dardanelles? The Bosphorus? Why not the Thames? And if the corn-laws continue much longer, what means of defence shall we possess against any invader? No trade, no power, no resources, no money, no arms, no fleets, no soldiers! and, worst of all, we shall have nothing worth fighting for! The Roman nobles killed the Gracchi, and monopolized the soil; but they did not bread-tax the Roman people. If we were invaded and conquered, could the conqueror do worse than bread-tax us? Assuredly, he would not do that; he would know his own interest better. The British Government is the only one that ever legislated against the bread of its people. Will the people then fight for the bread-tax; for the bread-tax-eaters? If they will, may the infamous whip—which none know so well how to wield as the bread-taxry of England—horribly kill with patrician mercy all whom the bullet spares! But there are some among us who will not fight for the bread-tax. They may fail in their efforts to save their country; but they will have done their duty. Their country may fall; but they will not have overthrown her; nor have laughed, nor have yawned, while the enemies of the human race were tearing out her vitals, and feeding on them exultingly in open day, like over-gorged wolves, that vomit, and return, with lolling tongues, to gorge again. One would think the land-owners—and their apes, the laughers, and the yawners—might be satisfied with having rendered revolution in this country inevitable. But they seem determined to ensure the worst horrors of revolution also. What produced the horrors of the first French Revolution? Famine, like that which the corn-laws may produce here at any moment; famine, which covered France with misery and death, at the very outbreak of that tremendous convulsion, which might yet teach us, if we were wise, how to avoid our evil destiny; for nations are a fate unto themselves, and make what they call their destiny, be it for good or for evil.

EXORDIUM.

Monopoly! if every funeral bough
Of thine be hung with crimes too foul to name;
Accurs'd of millions! if already thou,
Watch'd by mute vengeance and indignant shame,
Art putting forth thy buds of blood and flame,*
What will thy fruitage be? No matter—wave
Thy branches o'er our hearts! and, like a pall,
Let thy broad shadow darken Freedom's grave!
Not yet the Upas of the Isles shall fall,
If ought shall stand. Spread, then, and cover all!
Fear'st thou the axe? Long since the feller died;
And thou art deaf to thunder. But, Black Tree!
Thine own fruits will consume thee in thy pride!
O may thy inbred flame blast nought but thee,
When burns the beacon which the blind shall see!
Meantime, I make my theme the toil and grief
That water thee with tears—the fear and hate
Whose mutter'd curses fan thy deadly leaf—
Sad, silent changes—burning wrongs, that wait
To hear Delusion scream at Rapine's gate,
"Our master's cause is lost, and Hell 's undone!"

THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

CONTENTS.

Continued frost.—Enoch Wray leaves his cottage on a visit to the neighbouring town.—His blindness and poverty.—His familiarity with the old roads of the country.—His perplexity in the town.—Changes there.—Rural names of some of the streets.—Country-born widow and her attempts at a garden.—Her consumptive boy, and his flowers.—Female artisans singing hymns at their labour.—Meeting of Enoch Wray and his old blind servant.

BOOK I.

I.

Through fiery haze broad glares the angry sun;
The travell'd road returns an iron sound;
Rings in the frosty air the murderous gun;
The fieldfare dies; and heavy to the ground,
Shot in weak flight, the partridge falls—his wound
Purpling with scatter'd drops the crusted snow.
Loud thumps the forge; bright burns the cottage fire,
From which the tilter's lad is loth to go;
Well pleas'd the tramper sees the smoke aspire;
High flies the swan; each wild strange bird is shyer,
And, terror-taught, suspects hill, vale, and plain.

II.

Our poor blind father grasps his staff again—
O Heav'n! protect him on his way alone!
Of things familiar to him, what remain?
The very road is chang'd; his friend, the stone
On which he wont to sit and rest, is gone;
And ill the aged blind can spare a friend!

* But what can the Grand Bashaws of any nation have to fear from the discontent of six, or eight, or ten, or twelve millions of paupers? The multitude have ever been as a flock of sheep, whether they offer their wool to the shears or their throats to the knife. "God curse these Christian dogs!" said Kaled—"they tire my arm." "Confound these Rebels!" cries the Orange Squire. "Let us *ride* them down; they are but six millions." "The thicker the hay the easier mown," said Alaric; and he, too, was a barbarian.

III.

How lone is he, who, blind and near his end,
Seeks old acquaintance in a stone or tree!
All feeling and no sight! O let him spend
The gloaming hour in chat with memory!
Nor start from dreams to curse reality,
And friends more hard and cold than trees and stones!

IV.

He takes the townward road, and inly groans
At men, whose looks he does not see, but feel;
Men whose harsh steps have language! cruel tones
That strike his ear and heart, as if with steel!
Where dwelt they, ere Corruption's brazen seal
Stamp'd power's hard image on such dross as their's?

V.

Thou meanest thing that Heav'n endures and spares!
Thou upstart dandy, with the cheek of lead!
How dar'st thou from the wall push those gray hairs?
Dwarf! if he lift a finger, thou art dead:
His thumb could fillip off thy worthless head—
His foot, uplifted, spurn thee o'er the moon!

VI.

"Some natural tears he drops, but wipes them soon;"
And thinks how chang'd his country and his kind,
Since he, in England's and in manhood's noon,
Toil'd lightly and earn'd much; or, like the wind,
Went forth o'er flowers, with not a care behind,
And knew nor grief, nor want, nor doubt, nor fear.

VII.

Beadle! how canst thou smite, with speech severe,
One who was reverenc'd long ere thou wast born?
No homeless, soulless beggar meets thee here,
Although that threadbare coat is patch'd and torn:
His bursting heart repels thy taunt with scorn,
But deems thee human, for thy voice is man's.

VIII.

You, too, proud dame, whose eye so keenly scans
The king's blind subject on the king's high road!
You who much wonder that, with all our plans
To starve the poor, they still should crawl abroad!
Ye both are journeying to the same abode.
But, lady, your glad eye, o'er wave, and shore,
And shoreless heav'n, with sightless speed may rove,
And drink resplendent joy; while he no more
Shall look on Nature's face: Rock, river, grove,
Hate's withering frown, the heart-sent blush of love,
Noon, midnight, morning, all are dark to him!

IX.

Thou, skaiter! motion-pois'd, may'st proudly swim
In air-borne circles o'er the glassy plain,
While beauty lauds thy graceful sweep of limb;
But to the blind, alas! her praise is pain:
It but recalls his boyish days in vain,
When he too, seen and prais'd, could see and praise.
To him there is no beauty but the heart's,
No light but that within; the solar blaze
For him no colour to the rose imparts;
The rainbow is a blank; and terror starts
No ghost in darkness thicker than his own.

X.

Yet sweet to him, ye stream-lov'd valleys lone,
Leafless, or blossoming fragrant, sweet are ye!
For he can hear the wintry forest groan,
And feel the grandeur which he cannot see,
And drink the breath of Nature, blowing free.
Sweet still it is through fields and woods to stray;
And fearless wanders he the country wide,
For well old Enoch knows each ancient way;
He finds in every moss-grown tree a guide—
To every time-dark rock he seems allied:
Calls the stream "sister!" and is not disown'd.

XI.

Usurper of the hills! hast thou dethron'd
The regal oak? He bows his honours hoar,
Too conscious of his fall, in vain bemoan'd;
He yields to thee, storm-loving sycamore!
And on the inland peak, or sea-beat shore,
Thou reign'st alike. But thee, though yonder hill
Stoops to thy height, our father planted here;
And still he loves thy palmy shade, and still,
E'en when the snow-flake plumes thy branches sere,
He climbs the age-worn road that lingers near,
And seems, though blind, on distant hills to gaze.

XII.

But much he dreads the town's distracting maze,
Where all, to him, is full of change and pain.
New streets invade the country; and he strays,
Lost in strange paths, still seeking, and in vain,
For ancient landmarks, or the lonely lane
Where oft he play'd at Crusoe, when a boy.
Fire vomits darkness, where his lime-trees grew;
Harsh grates the saw, where coo'd the wood-dove coy;
Tomb crowds on tomb, where violets droop'd in dew;
And, brighter than bright heav'n, the speedwell blue
Cluster'd the bank, where now the town-bred boor
(Victim and wretch, whose children never smile)
Insults the stranger, sightless, old, and poor,
On swill'd Saint Monday, with his cronies vile,
Drunk for the glory of the holy isle,
While pines his wife, and tells to none her woes!

XIII.

Here, Enoch, flaunts no more the wild briar rose,
Nor basks the lizard here, or harmless snake.
No more the broom, in spring, all golden glows
O'er the clear rill, that, whimpering through the brake,
Heard thy blythe youth the echoing vale awake.
All that was lovely then is gloomy now.
Then, no strange paths perplex'd thee—no new streets,
Where draymen bawl, while rogues kick up a row;
And fishwives grin, while fopling fopling meets;
And milk-lad his rebellious donkey beats;
While dwarfish cripple shuffles to the wall;
And hopeless tradesman sneaks to alehouse mean;
And imps of beggary curse their dad, and squall
For mammy's gin; and matron, poor and clean,
With tearful eye, begs crust for lodger lean;
And famish'd weaver, with his children three,
Sings hymns for bread; and legless soldier, borne
In dog-drawn car, imploreth charity;
And thief with steak from butcher runs forlorn;
And debtor bows, while banker smiles in scorn;
And landed pauper, in his coach and four, [a]
Bound to far countries from a realm betray'd,
Scowls on the crowd, who curse the scoundrel's power,
While coachee grins, and lofty lady's maid
Turns up her nose at bread-tax-paying trade,
Though master bilketh dun, and is in haste.

XIV.

Chang'd scenes, once rural—chang'd, and not defac'd!
Far other woes were yours in times of old,
When Locksley o'er the hills of Hallam chas'd

The wide-horn'd stag, or with his bowmen bold
Wag'd war on kinglings. Vassal robbers prowl'd,
And, tiger-like, skulk'd robber lords for prey,
Where now groan wheelworn streets, and labour bends
O'er thousand anvils. Bled the feudal fray,
Or rav'd the foray, where the cloud ascends
For ever; and from earth's remotest ends
Her merchants meet, where hamlets shriek'd in flames.

XV.

Scenes, rural once! ye still retain sweet names,
That tell of blossoms and the wandering bee:
In black Pea-Croft no lark its lone nest frames;
Balm-Green, the thrush hath ceas'd to visit thee!
When shall Bower-Spring her annual corncrake see,
Or start the woodcock, if the storm be near?

XVI.

But, mourning better days, the widow here
Still tries to make her little garden bloom—
For she was country-born. No weeds appear,
Where her poor pinks deplore their prison-tomb;
To them, alas! no second spring shall come!
And there, in May, the lilac gasps for breath;
And mint and thyme seem fain their woes to speak,
Like saddest portraits, painted after death;
And spindling wallflowers, in the choaking reek,
For life, for life uplift their branches weak.
Pale, dwindled lad, that on her slated shop
Sett'st moss and groundsel from the frosty lea!
O'er them no more the tiny wren shall hop.
Poor plants!—poor child! I pity them and thee!
Yet blame I not wise Mercy's high decree.
They fade—thou diest; but thou to live again—
To bloom in heav'n. And will thy flowers be there?
Heav'n, without them, would smile for thee in vain.
Thither, poor boy, the primrose shall repair,
There violets breathe of England's dewy air,
And daisies speak of her, that dearest one,
Who then shall bend above thy early bier,
Mourning her feeble boy for ever gone,
Yet long to clasp his dust for ever here!
No, no, it shall not want or flower or tear!
In thy worn hand her sorrow will not fail
To place the winter rose, or wind-flower meek;
Then kiss thy marble smile, thy forehead pale,
But not the icy darkness from thy cheek;
Then gaze—then press her heart that yet shall break;
And feebly sob—"My child, we part to meet!"

XVII.

Hark! music still is here! How wildly sweet,
Like flute-notes in a storm, the psalm ascends
From yonder pile, in traffic's dirtiest street!
There hapless woman at her labour bends,
While with the rattling fly her shrill voice blends
And ever, as she cuts the headless nail,
She sings—"I waited long, and sought the Lord,
And patiently did bear." A deeper wail
Of sister voices joins, in sad accord—
"He set my feet upon his rock ador'd!"
And then, perchance—"O God, on man look down!"

XVIII.

And Enoch seeks, with pensive joy, the town;
For there his brother in misfortune dwells,
The old and sightless sawyer, once his own.
They meet—with pride and grief his bosom swells;
And how they once could see, each sadly tells.
But Charles is chang'd; and Enoch's bosom bleeds
To mark the change. Though aged but eighty years,
Bedrid and blind, the sorrowing sawyer needs
All friendly aid. Crack'd, on the wall, appears
His famous violin. No rival fears
His trembling hand, which never more shall call
The young, the gay, the manly, and the fair,
To penny hop or rustic festival!
No fading prude again shall curl her hair,
Nor fop new whiskers buy, nor age repair
To hear him charm the loveliest of the land.
The tear is trembling in our father's eye;
Kindly he takes his ancient servant's hand,
Stoops to his whisper, to his feeble sigh
Sighs; and, with hands uplifted reverently,
And heav'nward eyes, upon his bended knees,
Implores the Father of the poor to spare
His pious friend, and cure his long disease;
Or give him strength his painful load to bear,
That, dying, he may shew "what good men are:"
For Thou disdain'st not pray'r from lowly walls.
The squalid hovel, where the poor and just
Kneel, is, in thy sight, splendid as the halls
Where pray the proud—with contrite hearts, I trust—
Then highest when they know they are but dust.
O God! continue to thy grateful son
The grace which thou hast never yet denied
To humble faith, that bids thy will be done!
And let it still, in meekness, be his pride
To praise thy name, and hear it glorified!
Poor is thy son, and blind, and scorn'd, like me;
Yet thee we bless, that he can proudly say
He eats the hoarded bread of industry,
And that he hath not, in his evil day,
Tasted the bitterness of parish-pay.
Though frail thy child, like all who weep below,
His life, thou know'st, has been no baneful weed;
He never gather'd where he did not plough,
He reap'd not where he had not scatter'd seed;
And Christ, we know, for sinners deign'd to bleed!
At *thy* tribunal want may be forgiv'n;
There, to be lowly is not to be base.
Oh, then—if equal, in the eye of Heav'n,
Are all the children of the human race;
If pomp and pride have in thy courts no place—
Let humble friends, who long have sojourn'd here
In love united, meet in love again,
Where dust, divorc'd from sin, and pain, and fear,
In ever-bless'd communion shall remain,
With powers that know not death, nor grief, nor stain,
Warbling to heav'nly airs the grateful soul!

BOOK II.

CONTENTS.

A fine day in winter.—Enoch Wray seated in the sunshine at his cottage door.—His neglected garden a symptom of poverty.—The condition of the poor changed for the worse since the Patriarch was young.—Great events of his time:—Invasion of England by the Pretender;—American War;—French Revolution;—Napoleon.

I.

Thou call'st the Village Patriarch to his door,
Brief, brilliant summer of a winter's day!
While the sweet redbreast, minstrel of the poor,
Perch'd on the blossoming hazle, trills his lay,
To cheer that blind, good man, old Enoch Wray.

Behold our Father, still unbow'd by time!
Eld with his gentle locks full gently plays;
And pain, in reverence, spares the man sublime:
How few such men grace these degenerate days!
E'en Death, though fain to strike, in awe delays,
As if immortal age defied his might.
Lo! where the peeping primrose comes again,
To see his sad, bright eyes, that roll in night,
While melts the hoar-frost on the cottage pane,
And dew-drops glitter in the lonely lane!
Calm, as of old, with not one hoary hair
Chang'd, thou art listening for the vernal bee;
Thy fingers, like the daisy's petals fair,
Spread to the sun, that loves to look on thee—
Thou almost god-like in thy dignity!
Hark, how the glad rill welcomes thee with pride!
Ye have been friends and neighbours five-score years—
Father! the stream still loiters at thy side,
And still unchang'd by envious time appears;
Like human life, it flows, a stream of tears—
But not to pass, like human life, away.

II.

What, though thy locks of venerable gray
Claim not with yon wild cliffs coeval date,
Yet, blind old man, shake hands with them, for they
Are dark like thee; and, by an equal fate,
They too, enduring long, shall perish late.
Thou see'st not Winco, in his dusky cap,
Lean'd on his elbow, as becomes his years,
With all the past beneath him, like a map,
O'er which he bends and ruminates in tears;
But how like thee that wo-mark'd hill appears!
Ye are not changeless, though ye long endure,
And Eld herself sees but what still hath been,
In him and thee. Nor art thou yet mature
And ripe for death, but strong in age and green,
And alter'd less than this pathetic scene.
The cottage, where thy sire and his were born,
Seems, as of old, a hillock in the vale:
But many a chink admits the breezy morn;
Neglect long since divorc'd the jasmine pale
That clasp'd thy casement; and the sorrowing gale
Sighs o'er the plot where erst thy choice flowers bloom'd.
Ah! when the cottage garden runs to waste,
Full oft the rank weed tells of hopes entomb'd,
And points at man, once proud, now scorn'd, debas'd!
The dogs bark at him; and he moves, disgrac'd,
O'er wither'd joys which spring shall ne'er renew.

III.

Yet here, e'en yet, the florist's eye may view
Sad heirs of noble sires, once dear to thee;
And soon faint odours, o'er the vernal dew,
Shall tempt the wanderings of the earliest bee
Hither, with music sweet as poesy,
To woo the flower whose verge is wiry gold. (b)

IV.

But on thy brow, O ne'er may I behold
Sadness!—Alas, 'tis there, and well it may!
For times are chang'd, and friends grow scarce and cold!
O let not want "his ready visit pay"
To sightless age, that knew a better day!
O may no parish crust thy lips prophane!

V.

Man, poor and blind, who liv'st in worse than pain!
Where'er thou art, thou helpless, wingless owl!
The worm, our eyeless sister, might disdain
Thee, subject to thy fellow's proud control.
But what a worm is he, the blind in soul,
Who makes, and hates, and tortures penury!
Ah! who shall teach him mercy's law sublime?
He who can sever wo and poverty,
Or pride and power, or poverty and crime;
He who can uninstruct the teacher, Time.
Oh, yet erect, while all around are bow'd,
Let Enoch Wray's majestic pride remain,
A lone reproach, to sting the meanly proud,
And shew their victims—not, perhaps, in vain—
What Britons have been, and may be again.
O Age and Blindness, why should you be pair'd?
O sisters three, worst fates, Want, Blindness, Age!
Hope look'd from heav'n, beheld you, and despair'd!
But now she rends her hair, in grief and rage;
Her words are prophecy, her dreams presage
Evil to serf and lord; for want hath sworn
Thus, to the delver of the perilous mine,
And him who wakes with scrating file the morn—
"By the sad worm that dies not, I am thine,
And mine art thou; thy joys shall still decline
Till death; thy woes increase till death—toil on!"

VI.

But why forestall our griefs? Dark thoughts, begone!
Sufficient is its evil for the hour.
The verdant leaves drop from us one by one;
We need not shake them down. Life's weeping flower
Droops soon enough, however slight the shower;
And hope, unbidden, quits our fond embrace.

VII.

I *will* not read dejection in thy face,
Nor aught save tranquil hope and gentle doom;
But deem thee parent of a happy race,
Thy slumbers peaceful, distant yet thy tomb;
And, in thy autumn, late the rose shall bloom.
Come, let us walk, as we have often walk'd,
Through scenes belov'd, that whisper of the past;
And talk to me, as thou hast often talk'd,
Of winged hours, too happy far to last,
When toil was bliss, and thrift could gather fast
Funds to sustain his long life's tranquil close;
When faces wore no masks, and hearts were glad;
When freedom's champions were not labour's foes;
When no man deem'd the wise and honest mad;
And Pope was young, and Washington a lad.
Thou to the past can'st say, "Rise, live again!"
For, Enoch, well rememb'rest thou the time
When Britons till'd the Eden of the main,
Where manly thoughts were utter'd, e'en in rhyme,
And poverty was rare, and not a crime.
What envied England was, long years ago,
That times are alter'd, thou can'st truly tell;
And, if thy thoughts are flowers that bloom in snow—
If with the present and the past they dwell—
Then, of the lifeless, like a passing bell,
Speak to the living, ere they perish, too.
If memory is to thee a precious book,
Brightest where written first, and brightly true,
Turning the pictur'd pages, bid me look
On sunny meadow and rejoicing brook,
And toil-brown'd labour, as the throstle gay.

VIII.

Thou weepest, sightless man, with tresses gray!
But wherefore weep o'er ills thou canst not cure?
The darkest hour will quickly pass away,
And man was born to suffer and endure.
But, come what may, *thy* rest is near and sure;

Thy bed is made, where all is well with all
Who well have done. Then, Enoch, cease to mourn!
Lift up thy voice, and wake the dead! Recall
The deeds of other days! and from the urn
Of things which were, shake words that breathe and burn.
O'er the dark mantle of the night are shed
Sparks of the sun, in starry spangles proud:
In show'ry spring, when morn his radiant head
Veils, the rich broom, with glittering diamonds bow'd,
Is sunny light beneath the sunless cloud.
Though Nature to thine eye is vainly fair,
Green laugh the seasons, and the laughing light
Is verdant in thy soul—the flower is there
That wither'd four-score years ago, still bright,
And bath'd in freshness by the dewy air.
And pitying spirits to thine ear repair
With tales, to which unsorrowing hearts are deaf;
And deeds, whose actors live not, live with thee;
Still laugh and weep long buried joy and grief
Which, speaking with thine eloquent tongue, shall be,
When thou art gone, alive to memory.
Thus to great men their country—when the bust,
The urn, the arch, the column fail—remains;
For ever speaks of godlike deeds the dust
Which feet immortal trod; and rocks, and plains,
When History's page no symbol'd thought retains,
Hear dim tradition talk of deathless men.

IX.

Bright on the storm-swoll'n torrent of the glen
Is angry sunset; bright, and warm, and strong,
Are the rich visions which the poet's pen
Clothes in sweet verse; but brighter is the song
Of truth unwritten, from our father's tongue.
Ah! who starts now at Balmerino's name,
Which England heard pronounc'd in dreams, and woke?
Then every mountain had a voice of flame;
Blue Kinderscout to starting Snailsden spoke,
And fiery speech from troubled Stanedge broke.
Tell, Enoch, yet again, of that huge tree,
Old as the hills; that tree to whose broad shade
Your herds were driv'n, when age and infancy,
The thoughtful matron, and the weeping maid,
Fled through the gloom where lonest Rivilin stray'd.
Speak of the cellar and the friendly well
In which thy mother, trembling, hid her plate;
The ancient cup, whose maker none can tell;
The massive tankard used on days of state;
And coins long hoarded, all of sterling weight.
Say how retir'd the robbers, disarray'd;
Boast of the arms thy sire was proud to wield;
Draw from its sheath, in thought, the trusty blade
That drove rebellion o'er Culloden's field,
Oppos'd in vain by Highland dirk and shield;
And feel the blood-rust on its splendour keen!

X.

Then wing my spirit to a grander scene;
Let burning thoughts and words for utterance throng;
And bid me mark—though clouds will intervene
To veil the waters swift, and wild, and strong—
How pours the tide of human fate along.
Tell of sad s ife with Britain's sons, who trod
Earth's virgin soil, beyond the sun-lov'd wave;
Men—owning no superior but their God,
Strong as their torrents, as their eagle, brave—
Who dug with Freedom's sword Oppression's grave!
Tell, too, of him, the warrior-sage, whose deeds
Uncurs'd the future, and enfranchis'd man!
But ah! not yet—Time's darkest hour succeeds,
Unmatch'd in wo since life and death began!
For Evil hath her place in Mercy's plan,
And long will furnish themes for mournful rhymes.

XI.

Speak!—if thy soul, too full of ancient times,
Will condescend of later deeds to tell—
Speak of the day of blood, the night of crimes,
The moral earthquake, and the earthly hell,
When slaves smote tyrants serv'd too long and well.
Say how attention listen'd, pale, in heav'n,
When—madden'd by Abaddon's legion brands,
And too, too deeply wrong'd to be forgiv'n—
They found redemption in their own right hands,
Purg'd with retorted fire their demon'd lands,
And clad in fresher green the calcin'd sod.

XII.

Nor him forget, the stripling demi-god,
Before whose glance the herded nations fled.
Tell how he crush'd the mountains with his nod,
Walk'd on the storm, and to convulsion said,
"Be still, thou babbler!" Tell how he who read
The doom of kings fail'd to forsee his own.
He plac'd upon his head the crown of steel;
But dream'd he of his grave in ocean lone?—
Toussaint! thy foe was doom'd thy pangs to feel:
On jailer-England and on him her seal
Hath History set. For ocean's waste of waves
Fenc'd not his throne from million hostile swords;
Therefore he built on multitudinous graves
A tyrant's power, and strove to bind with cords
Thought; for she mock'd him with her wing of words
That withers armies. Who shall credit thee,
Genius? Still treacherous, or unfortunate,
Victim, or wronger! Why must Hope still see
Thy pinions, plum'd with light divine, abate
Their speed when nearest heav'n, to uncreate
Her glorious visions? Aye, since time began,
Creatures, with hearts of stone and brains of clay,
Scorning thy vaunt to wing the reptile, man,
O'er thee and thine have held barbarian sway;
And in the night which yet may have its day,
(The night of ages, moonless, starless, cold,)
If the rare splendour of the might of mind
Hath sometimes flash'd o'er plagues and errors old,
It flash'd but to expire, and leave behind
A deadlier gloom. But woodbine wreaths are twin'd
Round thorns; and praise, to merit due, is paid
To vulgar dust, best liked when earthy most.
While Milton grew, self-nourish'd, in the shade,
Ten Wallers bask'd in day. Misrule can boast
Of many Alvas; Freedom, oft betray'd,
Found her sole Washington. To shine unseen,
Or only seen to blast the gazer's eye;
Or struggle in eclipse, with vapours mean,
That quench your brightness, and usurp the sky;
Such, meteor spirits! is your destiny,
Mourn'd in times past, and still deplor'd in these.

BOOK III.

CONTENTS.

Comparative independence of skilled labour.—Fine Sabbath morning.—Sunday stroll of the townsman.—Coach-race.—Misery and misfortunes of the poor.—Congregation leaving the village church.—Old mansion.—Country youth working in the town.—Poacher of the manufacturing districts.—Concluding reflections.

I.

Ere Bedford's loaf or Erin's sty be thine,
Cloud-rolling Sheffield! want shall humble all.
Town of the unbow'd poor! thou shalt not pine
Like the fall'n rustic, licens'd Rapine's thrall;
But, first to rise, wilt be the last to fall!
Slow are thy sons the pauper's trade to learn.
Though, in the land that blossoms like the rose,
The English peasant and the Irish kerne
Fight for potatoes—thy proud labourer knows
Nor Workhouse wages, nor the exile's woes.
Not yet thy bit of beef, thy pint of ale,
Thy toil-strung heart, which toil could ne'er dismay,
Nor yet thy honest, skill'd right hand shall fail;
Last, from thy hearths, the poor man's pride shall stray;
And still shall come thy well-paid Saturday,
And still thy morn of rest be near and sure.

II.

Light! all is not corrupt, for thou art pure,
Unchang'd, and changeless. Though frail man is vile,
Thou look'st on him—serene, sublime, secure,
Yet, like thy Father, with a pitying smile.
Light! we may cloud thy beams, but not defile.
Even on this wintry day, as marble cold,
Angels might quit their home, to visit thee,
And match their plumage with thy mantle, roll'd
Beneath God's throne, o'er billows of a sea
Whose isles are worlds, whose bounds infinity.
Why then is Enoch absent from my side?
I miss the rustle of his silver hair;
A guide no more, I seem to want a guide,
While Enoch journeys to the house of pray'r;
And ne'er came Sabbath day but he was there!
Lo, how like him, erect and strong, though gray,
Yon village tower, time touch'd, to God appeals!
But hark! the chimes of morning die away!
Hark!—to the heart the solemn sweetness steals,
Like the heart's voice, unfelt by none who feels
That God is love, that man is living dust;
Unfelt by none whom ties of brotherhood
Link to his kind; by none who puts his trust
In nought of earth that hath surviv'd the flood,
Save those mute charities, by which the good
Strengthen poor worms, and serve their Maker best.

III.

Hail, Sabbath! day of mercy, peace, and rest!
Thou o'er loud cities throw'st a noiseless spell.
The hammer there, the wheel, the saw, molest
Pale thought no more. O'er trade's contentious hell
Meek quiet spreads her wings invisible.
But when thou com'st, less silent are the fields
Through whose sweet paths the toil-freed townsman steals.
To him the very air a banquet yields.
Envious, he watches the pois'd hawk, that wheels
His flight on chainless winds. Each cloud reveals
A paradise of beauty to his eye.
His little boys are with him, seeking flowers,
Or chasing the too venturous gilded fly.
So by the daisy's side he spends the hours,
Renewing friendship with the budding bowers;
And—while might, beauty, good, without alloy,
Are mirror'd in his children's happy eyes—
In his great temple, offering thankful joy
To Him, the infinitely Great and Wise,
With soul attuned to Nature's harmonies,
Serene, and cheerful, as a sporting child.
His *heart* refuses to believe, that man
Could turn into a hell the blooming wild,
The blissful country, where his childhood ran
A race with infant rivers, ere began
King-humbling, blind misrule his wolfish sway.

IV.

Is it the horn that, on this holy day,
Insults the songs which rise, like incense sweet,
From lowly roofs, where contrite sinners pray,
And pious rustics, poor, yet clean and neat,
To hear th' apostle of the hamlet, meet?
They come, they come! behold, hark!—thundering down,
Two headlong coaches urge the dreadful race;
Wo to outsiders, should they be o'erthrown!
Be ready, Doctor, if they break a trace!
Twelve miles an hour—well done; a glorious pace!
Poor horses, how they pant, and smoke, and strain!
What then? our jails are full, and England thrives.
Now, Bomb! now, Bomb! Defiance lends again;
Hurrah! Bill Breakneck or the Devil drives!
Whip!—populous England need not care for lives.
O blessed Sabbath! to the coach-horse thou
Bringest no pause from daily toil. For him
There is no day of rest. The laws allow
His ever-batter'd hoof, and anguish'd limb,
Till, death-struck, flash his brain with dizzy swim,
Lo, while his nostrils flame, and, torture-scor'd,
Quivers his flank beneath the ruthless goad,
Stretch'd, on his neck each vein swells, like a cord!
Hark! what a groan! The mute pedestrian, aw'd,
Stops—while the steed sinks on the reeling road,
Murder'd by hands that know not how to spare!

V.

Now landed Trader, that, with haughty stare,
Thron'd in thy curtain'd pew, o'erlook'st the squire!
Be kind and saintly; give, for thou can'st spare,
A pittance to the destitute; enquire
If yon pale trembler wants not food and fire?
Though thou could'st thrive, say not all others can,
But look and see how toil and skill are fed;
Lo, merit is not food to every man!
Pious thou art, and far thy fame is spread;
But *thy* Saint Peter never preach'd cheap bread.
Though bright the sun, cold blows the winter wind:
Behold the tramper, with his naked toes!
Where for the night shall he a lodging find?
Or bid that homeless boy relate his woes;
O try to feel what misery only knows,
And be like him of Wincobank, who ne'er
Sent a fall'n brother heart-struck from his door!
Or be like Wentworth's lord, a blessing here!
O imitate the steward of the poor,
According to thy means, heav'n asks no more!
Think of the hope of ten, the sire of nine,
The proud, skill'd man, wheel-shatter'd yesterday:
His wife will wring her hands ere eve decline;
And, ah! the next week's wages, where are they?
O soothe her, help her, name not parish-pay!
Think, too, of her, the maid who dwelt alone,
Whose first, sole, hopeless love was Enoch Wray.
Forgotten ere she died, she liv'd unknown,
And told her love but once, passing away
Like a slow shadow, in her tresses gray.
Proud, though despis'd, she sternly paid for rent
Her all, her weekly eighteenpence, and died,
Rather than quit the home where she had spent
Twice forty years. Her last pawn'd rug supplied
A fortnight's food. None heard her if she sigh'd;
None saw her if she wept; or saw too late,
That tears were ice upon her lifeless face.
Her Bible on her lap, before the grate

That long had known no fire, gnawing a lace
With toothless gums—the last of all her race—
She died of cold and hunger in her chair.

VI.

The bell strikes twelve. The ancient house of prayer
Pours forth its congregated youth and age;
The rich, the poor, the gay, the sad, are there;
And some go thence, who, in their hearts, presage
That one week more will end their pilgrimage.
First, in all haste, comes busy Bolus, croose
As bantam cock, and neat as horse fresh poll'd.
Then boys, all glad, as bottled wasps let loose,
Clapping their hands because their toes are cold.
Then the new Squire (more dreaded than the old)
Rais'd from the milk-cart by his uncle's will—
A Norfolk farmer he, who lov'd his joke,
At tax-worn tradesmen aim'd, with practised skill;
For, scorning trade, he throve, while traders broke,
And did not care a straw for Mister Coke.
Next, lo! the monarch of the village school,
Slow Jedediah comes, not yet the last.
Well can he bear the blame for stubborn fool;
Meekly he bows to yeoman, stumping past,
While Bolus, yet in sight, seems travelling fast.
Thou, Jedediah, learned wight, know'st well
Why rush the younglings from the porch with glee.
Dear to thy heart is Nature's breezy fell;
Deeply the captive's woes are felt by thee,
For thou art Nature's, Freedom's devotee!
Witness the moss that winter's rage defies,
Cull'd yesterday, beside the lizard's home;
Witness thou lichen of the precipice,
Beautiful neighbour of the torrent's foam,
Pluck'd, where the desert often sees him roam!—
Next comes the train who better days have known,
Condemn'd the taunts of paupers born to brook,
With prostrate hearts, that mourn their hopes o'er-thrown,
And downcast eyes, that shun th' upbraiding look.
Then comes his worship; then his worship's cook;
And then, erect as truth, comes Enoch Wray,
Bareheaded still, his cheek still wet with tears,
Pondering the solemn text, as best he may.
Lo, close behind, the curate meek appears!
Kindly he greets the man of five-score years, (°)
The blind, the poor! while purse-pride turns away,
And whispering asks, half-wishful, half-afraid,
If Enoch has applied for parish pay?
Short-sighted curate! ply the worldling's trade,
Or, unpreferr'd, grow pale with hope delay'd,
And die, the victim of low craft and spite.
Short-sighted curate! do as worldlings do;
Flatter the wolf, for he can snarl and bite.
What, though thy life is pure, thy doctrine true?
The Squireling hates thee; Bolus hates thee too.
Physician, surgeon, umpire of thy flock!
Dar'st thou be wise beyond the learned schools?
How laughs the Doctor at thy little stock
Of drugs and simples! Burn thy useful tools,
Priest and Mechanic, scorn'd by knaves and fools!
Then fawn on wealth and spurn the all-shunn'd poor.
To grandeur's halls, a punctual dun, repair;
Or still shall honest rags besiege thy door,
And thou be found at Want's bedside in pray'r,
While Pain moans low, and Death is watching there,
And Hope sees better worlds beyond the sky.

VII.

Near yonder archer yews—that solemnly
Keep aye uprais'd their desolate hands, in praise
Of the old heav'ns, and hoar antiquity—
Behold the Hall! There once dwelt Matthew Hayes,
A trading yeoman of the bygone days.
There, where his fathers sojourn'd on the plain,
And damn'd the French, yet lov'd all human kind,
His annual feast was spread, nor spread in vain;
There his own acres billow'd in the wind
Their golden corn. A man of vulgar mind,
He laugh'd at learning, while he scrawl'd his cross,
And rear'd his boy in sloth. But times grew worse:
War came—and public waste brought private loss;
And punctual bankruptcy, the thriving curse,
Beggar'd his debtors, till an empty purse
Answer'd all claims. He sold his land—then died,
Following his broken-hearted wife—and left
Their son, the heir of prejudice and pride,
To drink, and swear, of self-respect bereft,
And feed the day's debauch by nightly theft.
Behold his home, that sternly could withstand
The storms of more than twice a hundred years!
In such a home was Shakspeare's "Hamlet" plann'd,
And Raleigh's boyhood shed ambitious tears
O'er Colon's wrongs. How proudly it uprears
Its tower of cluster'd chimneys, tufted o'er
With ivy, ever green amid the gray,
Yet envy-stung, and muttering evermore
To yon red villa, on the king's highway,
"Thou dandy! I am *not* of yesterday."
Time seems to reverence these fantastic walls:
Behold the gables quaint, the cornice strong,
The chambers, bellying over latticed halls,
The oaken tracery, outlasting long
The carven stone; nor do their old age wrong
With laughter vile, or heartless jest profane!

VIII.

Why, Enoch, dost thou start, as if in pain?
The sound thou hear'st the blind alone could hear:
Alas! Miles Gordon ne'er will walk again;
But his poor grandson's footstep wakes thy tear,
As if indeed thy long lost friend were near.
Here oft, with fading cheek and thoughtful brow,
Wanders the youth—town-bred, but desert-born.
Too early taught life's deepening woes to know,
He wakes in sorrow with the weeping morn,
And gives much labour for a little corn.
In smoke and dust, from hopeless day to day,
He sweats, to bloat the harpies of the soil,
Who jail no victim, while his pangs can pay.
Untaxing rent, and trebly taxing toil,
They make the labour of his hands their spoil,
And grind him fiercely; but he still can get
A crust of *wheaten* bread, despite their frowns;
They have not sent him like a pauper yet
For Workhouse wages, as they send their clowns;
Such tactics do not answer yet in towns.
Nor have they gorg'd his soul. Thrall though he be,
Of brutes who bite him while he feeds them, still
He feels his intellectual dignity,
Works hard, reads usefully, with no mean skill
Writes, and can reason well of good and ill.
He hoards his weekly groat. His tear is shed
For sorrows which his hard-worn hand relieves.
Too poor, too proud, too just, too wise to wed,
(For slaves enough already toil for thieves,)
How gratefully his growing mind receives
The food which tyrants struggle to withhold!
Though hourly ills his every sense invade
Beneath the cloud that o'er his home is roll'd,
He yet respects the power which *man* hath made,
Nor loathes the despot-humbling sons of trade.
But, when the silent Sabbath-day arrives,
He seeks the cottage, bordering on the moor,
Where his forefathers pass'd their lowly lives—

Where still his mother dwells, content though poor,
And ever glad to meet him at the door.
Oh, with what rapture he prepares to fly
From streets and courts, with crime and sorrow strew'd,
And bids the mountain lift him to the sky!
How proud, to feel his heart not all subdu'd!
How happy to shake hands with Solitude!
Still, Nature, still he loves thy uplands brown—
The rock, that o'er his father's freehold towers!
And strangers, hurrying through the dingy town,
May know his workshop by its sweet wild flowers.
Cropp'd on the Sabbath from the hedge-side bowers,
The hawthorn blossom in his window droops;
Far from the headlong stream and lucid air
The pallid alpine rose to meet him stoops,
As if to soothe a brother in despair,
Exiled from Nature and her pictures fair.
E'en winter sends a posy to his jail,
Wreath'd of the sunny celandine—the brief,
Courageous windflower, loveliest of the frail—
The hazel's crimson star—the woodbine's leaf—
The daisy with its half-clos'd eye of grief—
Prophets of fragrance, beauty, joy, and song!

IX.

Bird! who would swelter with the laden throng,
That had thy wings? Earth spurners, you are free!
But thou must drag the chains of life along,
And, all but hopeless, till thou cease to be,
Toil, wo-worn Artisan! Yet, unlike thee
Is minion'd Erin's sty'd and root-fed clown.
How unlike thee, though once erect and proud,
Is England's peasant slave, the trodden down,
The parish-paid, in soul and body bow'd!
How unlike thee is Jem, the rogue avow'd,
Whose trade is poaching! Honest Jem works not,
Begs not, but thrives by plundering beggars here.
Wise as a lord, and quite as good a shot,
He, like his betters, lives in hate and fear,
And feeds on partridge, because bread is dear.
Sire of six sons, apprentic'd to the jail,
He prowls in arms, the tory of the night;
With them he shares his battles and his ale;
With him they feel the majesty of might;
No despot better knows that Power is Right.
Mark his unpaidish sneer, his lordly frown;
Hark, how he calls beadle and flunky liars!
See, how magnificently he breaks down
His neighbour's fence, if so his will requires!
And how his struttle emulates the Squire's!
And how like Mistress Gig, late Betty Scrubb,
Or Mister Dunghill, with his British pride,
He takes the wall of Glossin and his cub,
Or loyal Guts, who, bursting, coughs, to hide
The wounded meanness he mistakes for pride!
Jem rises with the moon; but when she sinks,
Homeward, with sack-like pockets, and quick heels,
Hungry as boroughmongering goul, he slinks.
He reads not, writes not, thinks not—scarcely feels;
Insolent ape! whate'er he gets he steals,
Then plays the devil with his righteous gain!

X.

O thou, whom conquer'd seas made great in vain,
Fall'n Venice! Ocean Queen no more! oppress'd
Nurse of true slaves, and lords whom slaves disdain!
Whisper thy sickening sister of the West
That Trade hath wings, to fly from climes unbless'd!
Trade, the transformer, that turns dross to bread,
And reaps rich harvests on the barren main;
Trade, that uproots wild flowers, and from their bed
Digs forth hard steel, to hew the bondman's chain:
Tamer of Tyrants, else oppos'd in vain!
And ye—once guardians of the fainting state,
Shades of the Rockinghams and Savilles! ye
Who liv'd when paupers did not dine on plate!
Wake!—can ye sleep? Indignant, wake! and see
Alms-taking wealth, alms-giving poverty!
Thou too, undemonizer of the proud!
Religion, that canst raise and dignify
The heart which abject penury hath bow'd!
From gorgeous climes beneath the eastern sky,
Call home the lightning of thy seraph eye;
Gird thy almighty loins; thy work *begin!*
Plead for the pariah of the isle of woes,
And speak, with Luther's voice, to giant Sin!
So may the year of tortur'd ages close
Ere the slow Angel start from his repose,
Like Stanedge, shaking thunder from his mane.

XI.

But who will listen when the poor complain?
Who read, or hear, a tale of wo, if true?
Ill fares the friendless Muse of want and pain.
Fool! would'st thou prosper, and be honest, too?
Fool! would'st thou prosper? Flatter those who do!
If, not unmindful of the all-shunn'd poor,
Thou write on tablets frail their troubles deep,
The proud, the vain, will scorn thy theme obscure.
What wilt thou earn, though lowly hearts may steep
With tears the page in which their sorrows weep?
Growl, if thou wilt, in vulgar sympathy
With plunder'd labour; pour thy honest bile
In satire, hiss'd at base prosperity;
And let his enviers, from their pittance vile,
Reward the pauper virtues of thy style.
But, hark! what accents of what slave enquire
Why rude mechanics dare to wield the quill?
He bids me from the scribbler's desk retire,
Rehoof my fingers, and forget my skill
In railing foully, and in writing ill.
O that my poesy were like the child
That gathers daisies from the lap of May,
With prattle sweeter than the bloomy wild!
It then might teach poor Wisdom to be gay
As flowers, and birds, and rivers, all at play,
And winds, that make the voiceless clouds of morn
Harmonious. But distemper'd, if not mad,
I feed on Nature's bane, and mess with scorn.
I would not, could not if I would, be glad,
But, like shade-loving plants, am happiest sad.
My heart, once soft as woman's tear, is gnarl'd
With gloating on the ills I cannot cure.
Like Arno's exil'd bard, whose music snarl'd,
I gird my loins to suffer and endure,
And woo Contention, for her dower is sure.
Tear not thy gauze, thou garden-seeking fly,
On thorny flowers, that love the dangerous storm,
And flourish most beneath the coldest sky!
But ye who honour truth's enduring form,
Come! there are heath-flowers, and the fanged worm,
Clouds, gorse, and whirlwind, on the gorgeous moor.

BOOK IV.

CONTENTS.

Recitation of Manfred to Enoch Wray.—Byron and his contemporaries.—First perusal of "Schiller's Robbers:" followed by the blindness of the Patriarch.—Further particulars of his history and character.

I.

Enoch, the lights are darken'd on the hill,
But in the house a thoughtful watch is set;
Warm on the ancient hearth fire glimmers still;

Nor do the travellers their way forget ;
Nor is the grasshopper a burthen yet.
Though blossoms on the mountain top the snow,
The maids of music yet are lingering near ;
Still are the wakeful listeners wise to know ;
Still to thy soul the voice of song is dear.
And when I redd to thee that vision drear—
The Manfred of stern Byron—thou didst bend,
Fix'd, to drink in each touching word and tone.
On thy chang'd cheek I saw strong feeling blend
Impetuous hues ; and tears fell, one by one,
From thy clos'd eyes, as on the moorland stone
The infant river drops its crystal chill.

II.

Say, then, is Pope our prince of poets still ?
Or may we boast, in these all rhyming days,
One climber of the Heliconian hill,
Whose classic spirit and unborrow'd lays
Johnson or caustic Swift had deign'd to praise ?
Scott, whose invention is a magic loom ;
Baillie, artificer of deathless dreams ;
Moore, the Montgomery of the drawing-room ;
Montgomery, the Moore of solemn themes ;
Crabbe, whose dark gold is richer than it seems ;
Keats, that sad name, which time shall write in tears ;
Poor Burns, the Scotchman, who was not a slave ;
Campbell, whom Freedom's deathless Hope endears ;
White, still remember'd in his cruel grave ;
Ill-fated Shelley, vainly great and brave ;
Wordsworth, whose thoughts acquaint us with our own ;
Didactic, earnest Cowper, grave and gay ;
Wild Southey, flying, like the hern, alone ;
And dreamy Coleridge, of the wizard lay :
These are true bards, who please not Enoch Wray !
But may not Byron, dark and grand, compete
With him who sung Belinda's ravished tress ?
Chaste is the muse of Pope, and passing sweet ;
But Byron is all fervour, rivalless
In might and passion. Woman's tenderness—
When woman is most tender, most deplor'd—
Moves not like his ; and still, when least divine,
He is a god, whose shrines shall be restor'd—
Apollo, self-dethron'd. His mind a mine
Where night-born gems in cherish'd darkness shine,
He—thrice a Ford, twice an Euripides,
And half a Schiller—hath a Milton's power,
But not a Shakspeare's ; strength, and fire, and ease,
And almost grace ; though gloomy as the tower
Around whose dangerous brow storms love to lower,
His world is all within, like Enoch Wray's.

III.

The full-blown flower, maturely fair, displays
Intensest beauty, and th' enamour'd wind
Drinks its deep fragrance. But could lengthen'd days
Have ripen'd to more worth dark Byron's mind,
And purg'd his thoughts from taint of earth refin'd ?
Or would he have sent forth a fiercer glow,
And gloomier splendour, from his core of fire ?
We know not what he might have been, but know
What he could *not* be. Proud of his high lyre,
We mourn the dead, who never can expire.
Proud of his fearless frown, his burning tear ;
Proud of the poet of all hearts, who heard
The mute reproach of Greece ; with zeal severe,
We scrutinize our least injurious word,
Nor longer deem his spleeny whims absurd,
His pangs ridiculous, his weakness crime.

IV.

Heaven's fav'rites are short liv'd. Stern fate and time
Will have their victims ; and the best die first,
Leaving the bad still strong, though past their prime,
To curse the hopeless world they ever curs'd,
Vaunting vile deeds, and vainest of the worst.
And he who cannot perish is no more !
He died who is immortal, and must be,
To time's slow years, like ocean to the shore,
The sun to heav'n ! He died where fell the free [d]
Of ancient Greece ; and Greeks his loss deplore.
There, where they fight, as fought their sires of yore,
In the great cause of all the good and great,
Liberty's martyr, England's, Europe's pride,
Girding his broken heart, he champion'd fate,
And laid down life—though not as Russell died,
To him, "by better ties than blood," allied.
Beyond the deep he perished, far from all
That darken'd death with love ; and, though the wave
Leagued with his foes to mock his dying call,
His dust is where his heart was, when he gave
Years of defeated glory for a grave,
Sighing in death his deathless love and wo.

V.

Father ! thy life has been prolong'd, to know
Strange times, strange men, strange changes, and strange lays ;
The warrior-bard whom Athens, long ago,
Crown'd peerless heir of never-dying praise,
Hath found a greater. In those fearful days
When, tempest-driv'n, and toss'd on troubled seas,
Thought, like the petrel, lov'd the whirlwind best,
And o'er the waves, and through the foam, with ease,
Rose up into the black cloud's thund'rous breast,
To rouse the lightning from his gloomy rest ;
Then, in the shadow of the mountains, dwelt
A lady, to whose heart high hopes were dear,
Who wildly thought, and passionately felt,
And strangely dream'd, that man—the slave of Fear,
And Pain, and Want—might be an angel here.
Full oft that lady of the glen remote
Call'd Enoch her wise mason ; oft partook
His humble meal, while, mirror'd in his thought,
The pensive past assum'd her own sweet look.
'Twas then she gave him her last gift, a book
Dark with strange power, and fearfully divine.
It chill'd his blood, it lifted up his hair ;
Spirits of terror liv'd in every line ;
A spell was on its pages of despair,
And burning woes, which Nature could not bear.
'Twas grand, but dreadful as the thoughts that wrung
The son of morning, from the solar beam
Hurl'd to the centre, where his soul, unstrung,
Disdain'd submission still, too proud to seem
Unvanquish'd. Was it but a fearful dream,
That tale of Schiller's ? *Did* the robber Moor
Pierce through Amelia's broken heart his own ?
Smite the dark tower and shake the iron door ?
And *was* he answered by a father's groan ?—
Th' Avonian seer hath ceas'd to stand alone.
But thou no more shalt printed vision read,
Enoch ! that dire perusal was thy last ;
For, from thine eyeballs, with a spirit's speed,
Gone, and for ever, light and beauty pass'd.
Not that a horror and a wo too vast
Had quench'd thy brilliant orbs : nor was thy doom
Like his—the bard who sang of Eden's bowers,
The bard of lofty thought, all fire and gloom,
All might and purity—whose awful powers,
Too darkly strong for organs frail as ours,
Press'd on his visual nerve a pall-like night :
But God, who chastens whom he loves, ordain'd,
Although thy frame was vigorous, thy step light,

Thy spirit like th' autumnal gale unrein'd—
That thine should be affliction, well sustain'd,
To shew the proud what humble worth can bear.

VI.

Then hither, Pride, with tearless eyes repair!
Come, and learn wisdom from unmurmuring wo,
That, 'reft of early hope, yet scorns despair.
Still in his bosom light and beauty glow,
Though darkness took him captive long ago.
Nor is the man of five-score years alone:
A heav'nly form, in pity, hovers near;
He listens to a voice of tenderest tone,
Whose accents sweet the happy cannot hear;
And, lo, he dashes from his cheek a tear,
Caught by an angel shape, with tresses pale.
He sees her, in his soul. How fix'd he stands!
But, oh, can angels weep? Can grief prevail
O'er spirits pure? She waves her thin, white hands;
And while her form recedes, her eye expands,
Gazing on joys which he who seeks shall find.
There is an eye that watches o'er the blind:
He *hath* a friend—"not lost, but gone before"—
Who left her image in his heart behind.
But when his hands, in darkness, trembled o'er
Her lifeless features, and he heard no more
The voice whose last tone bless'd him, frenzy came!
Blindness on blindness! midnight thick and deep,
Too heavy to be felt!—then pangs, like flame,
That sear'd the brain—sorrow that could not weep;
Fever, that would have barter'd worlds for sleep!
He had no tears, but those that inly pour,
And scald the heart; no slumbers, but the doze
That stuns the mourner who can hope no more;
But he had shudderings, stupor, nameless woes,
Horror, which only he that suffers knows.
But frenzy did not kill. His iron frame,
Though shaken, stood. The mind's night faded slow.
Then would he call upon his daughter's name,
Because it was her mother's! And his wo
Waned into resignation, pleas'd to shew
A face of peace, without the smile it wore.
Nor did the widower learn again to smile
Until his daughter to her Albert bore
Another Mary, (*) and on yonder stile
He nurs'd the babe, that sweetly could beguile,
With looks unseen, "all sadness but despair."

VII.

Nay, Enoch, do not weep. The day is fair,
And flings bright lightnings from his helm abroad;
Let us drink deep the pure and lucid air,
Ere darkness call thee to her damp abode.
Hark, how the titling whistles o'er the road!
Holm, plume thy palms! and toss thy purple Torse
Elm! but, Wood Rose, be not a bride too soon!
Snows yet may shroud alive the golden gorse:
Thou early-green! deem not thy bane a boon;
Distrust the day that changeth like the moon.
But still our father weeps. Ah! though all hues
Are dead to him, the floral hours shall yet
Shed o'er his heart their fragrance-loving dews!
E'en now, the daisy, like a gem, is set,
Though faint and rare, in winter's coronet.
Thy sisters sleep, adventurous windflower pale!
And thy meek blush affronts the celandine,
The starry herald of that gentlest gale
Whose plumes are sunbeams, dipp'd in odours fine:
Well may'st thou blush; but sad blight will be thine,
If glowing day shut frore in stormy night.

VIII.

Still dost thou weep, Old Man? The day is bright,
And spring is near: come, take a youngster's arm;
Come, let us wander where the flocks delight
At noon to sun them, when the sun is warm;
And visit then, beyond thy uncle's farm,
The one-arch'd bridge—thy glory, and thy pride,
Thy Parthenon, the triumph of thy skill;
Which still bestrides, and long it shall bestride,
The discontented stream, from hill to hill,
Laughing to scorn the moorland torrent still.
How many years hath he slept in the tomb
Who swore thy bridge would yield to one year's rain!
E'en London folks, to see and praise it, come;
And envious masons pray, with shame and pain,
For skill like Enoch Wray's, but pray in vain.
For he could do what others could not learn,
First having learned what Heav'n alone can teach:
The parish idiot might his skill discern;
And younglings, with the shell upon their breech,
Left top and taw, and listen to his speech.
The barber, proudest of mankind, confest
His equal worth—"or so the story ran"—
Whate'er he did, all own'd, he did it best;
And e'en the bricklayer, his sworn foe, began
To say, that Enoch *was* no common man.
Had he carv'd beauty in the cold white stone,
(Like Law, the unknown Phidias of our day,)
The village Angelo had quail'd to none
Whom critics eulogize, or princes pay;
And ne'er had Chantrey equall'd Enoch Wray,
Forgotten relic of a world that was!
But thou art not forgotten, though, alas!
Thou art become a stranger, sunny nook,
On which the changeful seasons, as they pass,
Wait ever kindly! He no more will look
On thee, warm bank! will see thy hermit brook
No more, no more. But kindled at the blaze
Of day, thy fragrance makes thy presence known.
Behold! he counts his footsteps as he strays!
He *feels* that he is near thy verdure lone;
And his heart whispers, that thy flowers are blown.
Pale primrose, know'st thou Enoch? Long ago
Thy fathers knew him; and their child is dear,
Because he lov'd them. See, he bends him low,
With reverend grace, to thee—and drops a tear.
"I see thee not," he sighs, "but thou art here;
Speak to a poor, blind man! And thou *canst* speak
To the lone blind. Still, still thy tones can reach
His listening heart, and soothe, or bid it break.
Oh, memory hears again the thrilling speech
Of thy meek beauty! Fain his hand would reach
And pluck thee—No! that would be sacrilege.

BOOK V.

CONTENTS.

An Excursion with Enoch Wray to the mountains.—Beautiful winter morning.—Rivers of Hallamshire.—Short lived grinder, contrasted with the Patriarch.—The moors.—Mountain bee.—Enfeebled snake.—Lost lad.—The desert, a fit abode for spirits.—Christ's love of solitude.—Reflections, suggested by the desolation of the scene.

I.

Come, Father of the Hamlet! grasp again
Thy stern ash plant, cut when the woods were young;
Come, let us leave the plough-subjected plain,
And rise, with freshen'd hearts, and nerves re-strung,

Into the azure dome, that, haply, hung
O'er thoughtful power, ere suffering had begun.

II.

Flowers peep, trees bud, boughs tremble, rivers run;
The redwing saith, it is a glorious morn.
Blue are thy Heavens, thou Highest! and thy sun
Shines without cloud, all fire. How sweetly, borne
On wings of morning o'er the leafless thorn,
The tiny wren's small twitter warbles near!
How swiftly flashes in the stream the trout!
Woodbine! our father's ever-watchful ear
Knows, by thy rustle, that thy leaves are out.
The trailing bramble hath not yet a sprout;
Yet harshly to the wind the wanton prates,
Not with thy smooth lisp, woodbine of the fields!
Thou future treasure of the bee, that waits
Gladly on thee, spring's harbinger! when yields
All bounteous earth her odorous flowers, and builds
The nightingale, in beauty's fairest land.

III.

Five rivers, like the fingers of a hand,
Flung from black mountains, mingle, and are one
Where sweetest valleys quit the wild and grand,
And eldest forests, o'er the silvan Don,
Bid their immortal brother journey on,
A stately pilgrim, watch'd by all the hills.
Say, shall we wander where, through warriors' graves,
The infant Yewden, mountain-cradled, trills
Her doric notes? Or, where the Locksley raves
Of broil and battle, and the rocks and caves
Dream yet of ancient days? Or, where the sky
Darkens o'er Rivilin, the clear and cold,
That throws his blue length, like a snake, from high?
Or, where deep azure brightens into gold
O'er Sheaf, that mourns in Eden? Or, where roll'd
On tawny sands, through regions passion-wild,
And groves of love, in jealous beauty dark,
Complains the Porter, Nature's thwarted child,
Born in the waste, like headlong Wiming? Hark!
The pois'd hawk calls thee, Village Patriarch!
He calls thee to his mountains! Up, away!
Up, up, to Stanedge! higher still ascend,
Till kindred rivers, from the summit gray,
To distant seas their course in beauty bend,
And, like the lives of human millions, blend
Disparted waves in one immensity!

IV.

Beautiful rivers of the desert! ye
Bring food for labour from the foodless waste.
Pleas'd stops the wanderer on his way, to see
The frequent wier oppose your heedless haste.
Where toils the Mill, by ancient woods embrac'd,
Hark, how the cold steel screams in hissing fire!
But Enoch sees the Grinder's wheel no more,
Couch'd beneath rocks and forests, that admire
Their beauty in the waters, ere they roar
Dash'd in white foam the swift circumference o'er.
There draws the Grinder his laborious breath;
There, coughing, at his deadly trade he bends.
Born to die young, he fears nor man nor death;
Scorning the future, what he earns he spends;
Debauch and Riot are his bosom friends.
He plays the Tory, sultan-like and well:
Wo to the traitor that dares disobey
The Dey of Straps! as rattan'd tools shall tell.
Full many a lordly freak, by night, by day,
Illustrates gloriously his lawless sway.
Behold his failings! hath he virtues, too?
He is no pauper, blackguard though he be.
Full well he knows what minds combin'd can do,
Full well maintains his birthright—He is free!
And, frown for frown, outstares monopoly!
Yet Abraham and Elliot, both in vain,*
Bid science on his cheek prolong the bloom;
He *will* not live! he seems in haste to gain
The undisturb'd asylum of the tomb,
And, old at two-and-thirty, meets his doom!
Man of a hundred years, how unlike thee!

V.

But steeper hills look down on stream and tree;
I pray thee, pause, or, lo, I lag behind!
Ah, thou wilt prove an overmatch for me,
Despite the sad erectness of the blind.
Whoever walks with thee, though young, will find
'Tis hard for youth to emulate thy age.
They were adventurous Sampsons, that would try
To lift a load with Enoch, or engage
To fling a heavier quoit. And thigh to thigh,
And foot to foot, plac'd well and warily,
He who throws thee had need be in his prime.

VI.

The moors—all hail! Ye changeless, ye sublime,
That seldom hear a voice, save that of Heav'n!
Scorners of chance, and fate, and death, and time,
But not of Him, whose viewless hand hath riv'n
The chasm, through which the mountain stream is driv'n!
How like a prostrate giant—not in sleep,
But listening to his beating heart—ye lie!
With winds and clouds dread harmony ye keep;
Ye seem alone beneath the boundless sky;
Ye speak, are mute—and there is no reply!
Here all is sapphire light, and gloomy land,
Blue, brilliant sky, above a sable sea
Of hills, like chaos, ere the first command,
"Let there be light!" bade light and beauty be.
But thou art here, thou rarest cloudberry!
O health-restorer! did he know thy worth,
The bilious townsman would for thee resign
His wall-grown peach, well pleased. In moorland earth
Thee would he plant, thou more than nectarine!
Thou better grape! and, in thy fruit divine,
Quaff strength and beauty from the living bough.

VII.

This scene is ancient, Enoch must allow.
Marble is less enduring than the flower
That wither'd ages hence, and withers now,
Where, black as night, th' unalter'd mountain's tower,
And baffled Time sees things that mock his power.
I thank ye, billows of a granite sea,
That the brib'd plough, defeated, halts below!
And thanks, majestic Barrenness, to thee,
For one grim region in a land of wo,
Where tax-sown wheat and paupers will not grow.
Here pause, old Man, the alpine air to taste:
Drink it from Nature's goblet, while the morn
Speaks like a fiery trumpet to the waste.
Here despot grandeur reigns in pomp forlorn.
Despair might sojourn here, with bosom torn,
And long endure, but never smile again.
Hail to the tempest's throne, the cloud's high road,
Lone as the aged sky, and hoary main!

* Mr Abraham improved, it is said, and Mr John Elliot invented, the grinder's preservative, which the grinders will not use!

The path we tread the Sherwood outlaws trode,
Where no man bideth, Locksley's band abode,
And urg'd the salient roe through bog and brake.

VIII.

Know'st thou our father, thou enfeebled snake,
That seek'st the sun too soon? Dost thou, in awe
And love, the seldom trodden path forsake?
To him, thou seem'st the very snake he saw
In ruddy boyhood. While thy folds withdraw,
Uncoil'd o'er cranshy roots, and fern-stalks dry,
He thinks he sees thee, colour'd like the stone,
With cruel and atrocious Tory eye,
And anxious look of dog that seeketh bone,
Or sour Scotch placeman, when his place is gone,
To feed some Whiggish fool, who will not eat.

IX.

Bee! that hast left thy sandy-cov'd retreat(f)
Before the living purple hath purvey'd
Food for thee; potent pigmy! that the fleet
Wing'd moments of the past, and years, array'd
In patch-work, from the robe of things decay'd,
Recall'st from sad oblivion! thou canst do
What mightiest spirits cannot—Silence hears
Thy murmur; and our sire, who hears it too,
Lives o'er again a hundred pensive years.
Pathetic insect! thou hast brought fresh tears
To sightless eye-balls, and a channel'd cheek.
O that once more he could become a boy,
And see the morning o'er the mountains break
In clouds of fire, which, army-like, *deploy*—
That he might chase thee, with a hunter's joy,
Vainly, o'er moss, and heath, and plumy fern!

X.

Father! we stand upon the mountain stern,
That cannot feel our lightness, and disdains
Reptiles, that sting and perish in their turn,
That hiss and die—and, lo! no trace remains
Of all their joys, their triumphs, and their pains!
Yet to stand here might well exalt the mind:
These are not common moments, nor is this
A common scene. Hark, how the coming wind
Booms, like the funeral dirge of wo, and bliss,
And life, and form, and mind, and all that is!
How like the wafture of a world-wide wing
It sounds and sinks—and all is hush'd again!
But are our spirits humbled? No! We string
The lyre of death with mystery and pain,
And proudly hear the dreadful notes complain
That man is not the whirlwind, but the leaf,
Torn from the tree to soar and disappear.
Grand is our weakness, and sublime our grief.
Lo! on this rock, I shake off hope and fear,
And stand releas'd from clay!—yet am I here,
And at my side are blindness, age, and wo.

XI.

Far to the left, where streams disparted flow,
Rude as his home of granite, dark and cold,
In ancient days, beneath the mountain's brow,
Dwelt, with his son, a widower poor and old.
Two steeds he had, whose manes and forelocks bold
Comb ne'er had touch'd; and daily to the town
They dragg'd the rock, from moorland quarries torn.
Years roll'd away. The son, to manhood grown,
Married his equal; and a boy was born,
Dear to the grandsire's heart. But pride, and scorn,
And avarice, fang'd the mother's small gray eyes,
That dully shone, like studs of tarnish'd lead.
She poison'd soon her husband's mind with lies;
Soon nought remain'd to cheer the old man's shed,
Save the sweet boy, that nightly shar'd his bed.
And worse days were at hand. The son defied
The father—seiz'd his goods, his steeds, his cart:
The old man saw, and, unresisting, sigh'd:
But when the child, unwilling to depart,
Clung to his knees, then spoke the old man's heart
In gushing tears. "The floor," he said, "is dry:
Let the poor boy sleep with me this one night."
"Nay," said the mother; and she twich'd awry
Her rabid lip; and dreadful was the sight,
When the dwarf'd vixen dash'd, with fiendish spite,
Her tiny fist into the old man's face;
While he, soft-hearted giant, sobb'd and wept.
But the child triumphed! Rooted to the place,
Clasping the aged knees, his hold he kept,
And once more in his grandsire's bosom slept.
And nightly still, and every night the boy
Slept with his grandsire, on the rush-strewn floor,
Till the old man forgot his wrongs, and joy
Revisited the cottage of the moor.
But a sad night was darkening round his door:
The snow had melted silently away,
And, at the gloaming, ceas'd the all-day rain;
But the child came not. Wherefore did he stay?
The old man rose, nor long look'd forth in vain;
The stream was bellowing from the hills amain,
And screams were mingled with its sullen roar:
"The boy is in the burn," said he, dismay'd,
And rush'd forth, wild with anguish. From the shore
He plung'd; then, staggering, with both hands
display'd,
Caught, screaming, at the boy, who shriek'd for
aid,
And sank, and rais'd his hands, and rose, and
scream'd!
He leap'd; he struck o'er eddying foam; he cast
His wilder'd glance o'er waves that yelp'd and
gleam'd;
And wrestled with the stream, that grasp'd him fast,
Like a bird struggling with a serpent vast.
Still, as he miss'd his aim, more faintly tried
The boy to scream; still down the torrent went
The lessening cries; and soon, far off, they died;
While o'er the waves, that still their boom forth
sent,
Descended, coffin-black, the firmament.
Morn came: the boy return'd not: noon was nigh;
And then the mother sought the hut in haste.
There sat the wretched man, with glaring eye;
And in his arms the lifeless child, embrac'd,
Lay like a darkening snow-wreath on the waste.
"God curse thee, dog! what hast thou done?" she
cried,
And fiercely on his horrid eye-balls gaz'd:
Nor hand, nor voice, nor dreadful eyes replied;
Still on the corpse he star'd with head unrais'd;
But in his fix'd eyes light unnatural blaz'd,
For *Mind* had left them, to return no more.
Man of the wither'd heart-strings! is it well?—
Long in the grave hath slept the maniac hoar;
But of the "lost lad" still the mountains tell,
When shriek the spirits of the hooded fell,
And, many-voic'd, comes down the foaming snow.

XII.

Hail! silence of the desert!—I speak low
In reverence—here the falcon's wing is awed,
As o'er the deep repose, sublimely slow,
He wheels in conscious majesty abroad.
Spirits should make the desert their abode.
The meekest, purest, mightiest, that e'er wore
Dust as a garment, stole from crowds unbless'd
To sea-like forests, or the sea-beat shore,
And utter'd, on the star-sought mountain's breast,
The holiest precepts e'er to dust address'd.

Oh, happy, souls of death-freed men, if here
Ye wander, in your noiseless forms, unseen!
Though not remote, removed from grief and fear,
And all that pride shall be, and guilt hath been;
While gentle death his shadow casts between
Thoughts seraph-wing'd, and man's infirmity!

XIII.

To live unseen, but not to cease to be!
Unheard, unseen, with men, or rocks, to dwell!
O that I were all thought and memory,
A wing'd intelligence invisible!
Then would I read the virgin's fears, and tell
Delicious secrets to her lover's heart,
By spectre-haunted wood, or wizard stream;
Or bid the awful form of Justice start,
And prompt the conscience-stricken murderer's scream;
Or scourge the rich man, in his ghastly dream,
For heartless deeds, unwept, and unaton'd.

XIV.

Hail, Desolation! Solitude! and, thron'd
On changeless rocks, Eternity! Look down,
And say, What see ye?—Want, that vainly groan'd,
While mercy gave him stones for food! The frown
Of guilt, on minds and hearts, in ruins strown!
Hate, torturing Constancy, that lov'd too well!
Majestic things, in gnats that live an hour!
Soul-bartering Faction, fain to buy or sell,
And 'spous'd to Fraud, with kingdoms for a dower!
Ye sister forms of Nature's dread and power!
Stand ye upon the earth? Heav'n hath no cloud
To be a carpet for your dismal feet.
Ye stand upon the earth, and skies are bow'd
To knee your throne, this granite-pillar'd seat,
That is, and was, and shall be. Wildly beat,
Beneath your footstool, passions, feelings, deeds,
Like billows on the solitary shore,
Where baffled wave to baffled wave succeeds,
Spurn'd by the sullen rocks, with sullen roar,
And rising, falling, foaming evermore,
To rise, and fall, and roar, and foam in vain.

XV.

Ye rocks! ye elements! thou shoreless main,
In whose blue depths, worlds, ever voyaging,
Freighted with life and death, of fate complain!
Things of immutability! ye bring
Thoughts that with sorrow and with terror wring
The human breast. Unchang'd, of sad decay
And deathless change ye speak, like prophets old,
Foretelling Evil's ever-present day;
And, as when Horror lays his finger cold
Upon the heart in dreams, appal the bold.
O thou, Futurity, our hope and dread,
Let me unveil thy features, fair or foul!
Thou, who shalt see the grave untenanted,
And commune with the re-embodied soul!
Tell me thy secrets, ere thy ages roll
Their deeds, that yet shall be on earth, in heav'n,
And in deep hell, where rabid hearts with pain
Must purge their plagues, and learn to be forgiven!
Shew me the beauty that shall fear no stain,
And still, through age-long years, unchang'd remain!
As one who dreads to raise the pallid sheet
Which shrouds the beautiful and tranquil face
That yet can smile, but never more shall meet,
With kisses warm, his ever-fond embrace;
So, I draw nigh to thee, with timid pace,
And tremble, though I long to lift thy veil.

BOOK VI.

CONTENTS.

Enoch Wray versifies his dream. His anxiety to recite his composition to his neighbour, Alice Green.—Snow-storm.—Disasters of Enoch Wray on his way to the cottage of Alice Green.—Her person described.—An incident in her life; and its consequences.—Her eloquence.

I.

Dreams! are ye vapours of the heated brain,
Or echoes of our deeds, our fears, our hopes?
Fever'd remembrances, that o'er again
Tell prose adventures, in poetic tropes,
While drowsy judgment with illusion copes
Feebly and vainly? Are ye paid when due?
Or, like our cobweb wealth, unfound when sought?
Be ye of sterling value, weigh'd and true,
Or the mere paper currency of thought,
By spendthrift fancy sign'd, and good for nought—
Enoch hath dream'd a dream, like saddest truth,
And done it into rhyme. And Alice Green—
The shrewish village quack, and ever sooth
Interpreter of dreams—can tell, I ween,
What signs and omens, rhym'd or rhymeless, mean.
With all a poet's ardour to rehearse
A vision, like the Florentine's of yore,
Feverish and nervous, muttering deathless verse,
He opens oft, and oft he shuts the door,
And every leaden minute seems a score.
But he is storm-bound. To the marsh below,
While squattering ducks descend, and, with pale beams,
The hooded, ineffectual sun, through snow
That fell all night, and still is falling, gleams,
Like reason, struggling half awake, in dreams,
He hears the redbreast peck the frosted pane,
Asking admittance to the warm fireside;
And—while o'er muffled ruts each cart and wain
Moves without sound—he opes the casement wide,
To hail once more the guest he ne'er denied;
Then spreads his hands, to feel if yet the plumes
Of heav'n are wavering in the noiseless air;
Determin'd—when the burden'd sky resumes
Its lucid azure, clear, and cold, and fair—
Through paths of hidden peril to repair,
And have some harmless fun with Alice Green.
How wild, how wondrous, and how chang'd the scene
Since yesterday! On hill and valley bright
Then look'd broad heav'n, all splendid and serene;
And earth and sky were beauty, music, light.
But now the storm-cock shakes the powdery white,
With start impatient, from his shivering wings;
And, on the maple's loaded bough depress'd,
Perch'd o'er the buried daisy sweetly sings,
With modulated throat and speckled breast,
To cheer the hen bird, drooping in the nest
On dusky eggs, with many a dot and streak.

II.

Love of the celandine and primrose meek!
Star of the leafless hazle! where art thou?
Where is the windflower, with its modest cheek?
Larch! hast thou dash'd from thy denuded brow
Blossoms, that stole their rose-hues from the glow
Of Even, blushing into dreams of love?
Flowers of the wintry beam and faithless sky!
Gems of the wither'd bank and shadeless grove!
Ye are where he who mourns you soon must lie;
Beneath the shroud ye slumber, tranquilly;
But not for ever. Yet a sudden hour
Shall thaw the spotless mantle of your sleep,
And bid it, melted into thunder, pour

From mountain, waste, and fell, with foamy sweep,
Whelming the flooded plain in ruin deep.
Yes, little silent minstrels of the wild,
Your voiceless song shall touch the heart again!
And shall no morning dawn on Sorrow's child?
Shall buried *mind* for ever mute remain
Beneath the sod, from which your beauteous strain
Shall yet arise in music, felt, not heard?
No! Faith, Hope, Love, Fear, Gladness, Frailty, all,
Forbid that man should perish. Like the bird
That soars and sings in Nature's festival,
Our souls shall rise—and fear no second fall—
Our adoration strike a lyre divine!

III.

Now, through the clearing storm, the sunbeams shine;
And, lo! the fluttering flakes are winnow'd fire!
Thinner and thinner fall the fleeces fine;
From mantled fells the umber'd clouds retire;
And heav'n, that stoop'd to earth, is lifted higher.
How Nature dazzles in her bridal vest!
Like air-blown fire on fire is light on snow.
A long-lost feeling wakes in Enoch's breast;
His sightless eye-balls feel a sapphire glow,
That speaks of hues and forms dead long ago—
The bright, the wild, the beautiful, the grand!

IV.

Now the third Mary takes her grandsire's hand,
And leads him forth into the soon-chang'd road;
A world unknown, an undiscover'd land!
Confus'd, amaz'd, perturb'd, he walks abroad,
Yet inly pleas'd, t'wards Alice Green's abode.
But, too erect on slippery paths to roam,
With forward hand, in vain his way he feels.
When snows are deep, the blind should stay at home.
At length, the path descends; he staggers, reels,
And from beneath him glide his treacherous heels.
He lies, with ghastly terror in his face,
Like one half-stunn'd beneath the lightning's stroke.
Rising, he slips; he moves with timid pace,
Almost repenting his intended joke;
Then clings, half prostrate, to the hoary oak,
And gasps, with eye-brows lifted in dismay.

V.

Ye who can gaze on beauty-breathing day,
And drink intoxication with your eyes!
Compassionate the sightless on his way;
With gloomy trepidation sympathize,
When faithless snows the icy way disguise;
With pity hear his faint and feeble call,
With pity see his quivering lip and cheek;
His grasping hands that try to catch the wall;
His wild, wide eyes, that helpless trouble speak;
His sliding feet; his knees, bent, trembling weak;
His hatless locks, which frantic dread uprears!
The beauteous girl, too, trembles, and, in tears,
Pale with her grandsire's fear, laments its cause.
But, lo! the skaiter, sliving Bill appears,
And, while the snow-flake on his broad chin thaws,
Deigns to instruct him in the skaiter's laws:
"Stoop, Enoch, stoop! bend forward! and unscar'd,
O'er slapest ice thy gloomy way pursue."
And see! old Alice limps from yonder yard!
Last night, she dream'd that Enoch came to woo
The five-times wedded, now aged eighty-two,
With fifty guineas sew'd in his left sleeve!
Certes, that ancient sleeve is darn'd and stitch'd:
But who shall now her dream-craft disbelieve?
He comes!—she laughs and winks, like one bewitch'd,
And feels already married, and enrich'd.
Her right hand on her hip, her left beneath
Her folded apron, at the crippled gate,
Where erst the ash tree look'd on fern and heath,
With palpitating heart, and shaking pate,
And short black pipe between her lips sedate,
The dream-expounder stoops! whose skill assures
To dreaming wights, whate'er they wish, and more;
The female Galen! famous for her cures,
And eke her salve, from Ecclesfield to Dore!
Almost to dead men she can health restore;—
Her right divine what patient dares dispute?
Her sacred mysteries deepest awe inspire;
Sublime as Laud, inerrable as Bute!
Who doubts her skill deserves the stake and fire:
Believe! Obey!—'tis treason to enquire.
And was she not a beauty in her youth?
Still she hath eyes—one red and blind, one green;
And in her upper jaw is yet a tooth,
Which, when she laughs or yawns, may well be seen,
With two below, and bluish stumps between.
Ah, faded one! not 'reft of every charm;
Was she not formed in Nature's finest mould?
The loveliest maiden, once, that cot or farm
Sent forth to shake the dew from cowslips cold?
The loveliest far of all, save Mary Gold?—
Enoch salutes her with a hearty smack,
And grasps her right hand in a living vice:
The gentle dame smiles meekly, and draws back;
But why should friends be formal and precise?
She leads him through the yard; and, in a trice,
Behold him, in her dear last husband's chair!
Lo! in the cheerful blaze his white locks gleam!
She sets before him her best hoarded fare,
And pours the long-cork'd bottle's gladdening stream,
Tapp'd from the birch tree, when the moon's wan beam
Silver'd the broken cloud and budding grove.

VI.

But, while he drank, she sigh'd and look'd above,
Where hung a portrait, faded in its frame,
The keepsake of her first and only love,
Who died unmarried, murmuring oft her name.
Still in her bosom glows the cherish'd flame
Of virgin love, for low-laid Thomas Broom.
Ah, who could dream—when, like a vestal vow'd,
Scattering her Sunday posy on his tomb,
A stainless, broken-hearted maid, she bow'd—
That clowns would whisper in the market crowd,
Of Alice Green's warm cordials, over proof?
And neighbours call her "Cut-and-come-again!"—
And to the passer-by point out the roof
Where dwells the widow, buxom, fair, and fain?
Too well she lov'd, but lov'd, alas, in vain!
And, cross'd in fondest love, her feelings froze,
Like dew-drops on the leafless blossoming sloe,
Crisp'd into diamonds when the north wind blows.
Her grief for Thomas was not worn for show,
As oft she told her husbands, long ago;
She wish'd he had been her's—and so wish'd they.

VII.

But when th' unconscious wooer, Enoch Wray,
Had duly prais'd her wine, her jam, and cream,
He look'd like one who had grave things to say,
And 'gan to tell that he had dream'd a dream;
And that he therefore came, her aid to pray,
Despite the drifted snow and slippery way.
Then Alice sought, with thin and palsied hand,
And slowly from her pouch, at last drew forth
Her spectacles, the wonder of the land,

Though purchas'd of a native Jew from Perth;
Once her third husband's, that best man on earth!
To mend her insight into things to come,
She set them on her snuffy nose astride;
But first she wip'd them with her learned thumb;
Then, to a drawer a crooked key applied,
And drew there out her book of art and pride.
She spread it, open, on her quaking knee,
With expectation in her upward look,
Gazing on Enoch, or impatiently
Turning the pages of the wond'rous book.
But—though despotic Alice ill could brook
Suspense, and long'd to speak her words of doom—
He still delay'd. Slyly he prais'd the rose,
(By him unseen,) which still, he said, in pride
Bloom'd on her *cheek*—he err'd, 'twas on her nose.
"Why might we not make up a match?" he cried:
She frown'd, she fuff'd, like eggs with bacon fried:
"She wonder'd that a man like Enoch Wray
Should talk such stuff—it ill became his years;
And yet she *had* been pretty in her day;
Nor is she quite so old as she appears;
But, foh! she blushes at the trash she hears."
Then, oft she drank his health, while Enoch smok'd;
And soon her tongue—that deafen'd Albert's mill,
When Richard, fifth and last, her rage provok'd—
Seem'd able, in the cause of her sweet will,
To talk into their graves five husbands still.
"I dream'd a dream," quoth he—but Alice Green
Is not now in the vein for hearing dreams;
And she long us'd to sov'reignty hath been:
But she dilates the more on other themes.
"Her house," she boasts, "is richer than it seems.
She has two clocks; her sheets are thirteen pair;
Her blankets twelve; and as for satin gowns,
She could lend six, and still have seven to spare!
Cotton is only fit for wives of clowns;
But *she* looks well in silks, even envy owns.
She *once* was cheated—when she bought her busts;
Her name is buy and pay; and not a straw
Cares she for draper Glossop, though he trusts,
As Mistress Strut well knows. When Swindler Mawe,
Ruin'd by women, racing, and the law,
Sold dish and spoon, she bought her feather bed
And her green sofa; but she quite forgot
Her sweet down pillows, and her curtains red.
She has a still too—Mistress Strut has not:
No doubt, they shall contrive to boil the pot;
But much would still have more. Your daru'd left sleeve
Seems heavy, Enoch. Cash is everything.
You must have money—plenty, I believe;
And money, Enoch, makes the slave a king. [ring?"
But how much have you? Have you bought the
What mortal poet, eager to recite,
Could interruption vile as this abide?
The village Dante lost his temper quite:
But still she talk'd; and he, still baffled, tried,
Between her endless words, a word to slide.
In vain he hinted that her pipe was out:
The paper, which she twisted, and illum'd,
To re-ignite the tube, avail'd him nought;
She talk'd, and held it burning, till, consum'd
And thrown upon the floor, it smok'd and fum'd.
And still she prais'd one Alice Green—then took
Her plenteous pinch of true rappee—then fuff'd
At Mistress Strut; and still, with heartier snook,
While learnedly her ancient wares she puff'd,
Up her hot nose the burning dust was snuff'd.
And, lo! their eager hands, uplifted, meet!
Both talk at once: but Alice perseveres;
And vanquish'd Enoch, angry, quits his seat.
Then Alice reddens; and in doubt appears
Whether to shake his hand or pull his ears.
Humbled and vex'd, his vision unrehears'd,
Without good b'ye, poor Enoch homeward goes,
And hears her laugh of rage behind him burst;
That laugh, which sounded like a peal of woes
To five bold husbands—let them now repose!—
But could the widow, too intent to wed,
Neglect to hear, on that unlucky morn,
Harmonious numbers, destin'd to be redd,
Perchance, in print, by critics yet unborn?
And did she laugh the glorious bard to scorn?
"Fool!" she exclaim'd—"I can expound this dream,
Whether I hear the dream itself or no:
His brain will yet with rhyme and nonsense teem;
His gold to cancel Albert's debts will go,
Unless I wed him—for a year, or so."
And would'st thou, Alice, change thy name again?

BOOK VII.

CONTENTS.

Enoch Wray's dream.

I.

Gone! are ye gone? Bright dreams of youth, adieu!
Old, blind, and poor, I dream of dreadful things.
Methought I saw a man, renown'd and true,
Rise from the grave, upborne on sable wings,
Bradshaw his name, abhorr'd by slaves and kings.
His hue was Death's, his majesty his own.
There was a thoughtful calmness in his air:
Decision, like a ready sword undrawn,
Repos'd, but slept not, on his forehead bare;
But Caution, too, and deep research were there.
At first, his lip curl'd fiercely, as he went
O'er fields, o'er towns, o'er souls, in baseness bow'd;
But, meeken'd soon, his awful visage blent
Sad beauty with his sternness, like the cloud
Whose tears are lightnings. "What!" he cried aloud,
"Is tyranny immortal? Oh, if here
Freedom yet linger, in what hated shed,
Where proud endurance scorns to drop a tear,
And wo-nurs'd virtues eat their hard-earn'd bread,
Nerves she the heart and hand that despot's dread?
Hide not thy head in clouds, thou Rock, that saw'st
The Pyms and Hampdens! these, our sons, can feel
The pang of shame, though, dwarf'd in soul, they boast
Nor manly thoughts, nor hearts, nor hands of steel,
Like those that battled for the common weal.
Say, Rock, is that a Briton? that mean thing,
Who dares not lift his eyes above the feet
Of pauper Satraps, or the village king
Whom they depute to torture and to cheat?
Slave—free to toil, that idle wolves may eat!
What is a Briton? One who runs away,
To barter souls for untax'd wine abroad,
And curse his brutes, who sweat at home, and bray.
Art thou a Briton, Ass, that lov'st the goad,
And bray'st in honour of thy glorious load?—
Say, palac'd pauper, drunk with misery's tears,
Did Russell, Fairfax, spring from gods like thee?
Or, scourge for poverty! is this Algiers?
Dog of the bread-tax-eating Absentee!
Our children feed thy lord—why growl at me?
Where are thy paper wings of yesterday,
Thou bankrupt gambler for the landed knave?—
Audacious poacher, scorn'st thou parish pay?
Kill'st thou God's hares to shun a beggar's grave?
What! is it better to be thief than slave?—

Wretch, that did'st kill thy sire, to sell him dead!
Art thou a Briton? Thou hast Strafford's brow.
Poor, corn-bill'd weaver, singing hymns for bread!
Could Hampden breathe where crawl such worms as thou?
Spirit of Pym! lo, these are Britons now!
Charles Stuart! are they worthy to be thine?
Thou smil'st in scorn, in triumph, and in pride.
And thou, at Marston taught by right divine,
Thou recreant patron of vain regicide!
Laugh'st thou at blasted hopes, whose vauntings lied?
Beast, featur'd like the angels! canst thou view
This dome, outstretch'd by God's geometry,
And doubt that *Man* may be sublime and true?
Or, while the boy smiles upward from thy knee,
Believe that slaves of slaves shall not be free?—
How like meek Laud yon Cadi-Dervise scowls!
A patent parson, made to please the squire!
Priest, Judge, and Jury, for the cure of souls!
Virtues like his no still small voice require;
He cries his wares, and is himself the crier.
No school is built, without his fulsome prayer,
Which fulsome prints, with fulsome praise, record;
No wretch is tried for want, but he is there
In solemn session, sourest on the board,
Where, like Saint Peter, he denies his lord.
O, Cant and Cunning! mark the contrast well;
The poor, damn'd here, are thankful, though they pine;
Through foul and fair, they limp t'wards heav'n or hell;
While he, (snug martyr,) when the day is fine,
Seeks Abraham's bosom, and a Tory's wine.
King of bad ale and hares! he shoots, and hunts;
Then whips, or jails, the wo that cannot pay;
Grants Lickgrub's license, and refuses Grunt's;
Or fines poor Strap, who shav'd on Sabbath day;
And, like Saint Barebones, he detests a play.
Thrice-loyal Jefferies! greet with shout and song
The heir of all the Noodles of past years,
Lord Robert Shallow! ready, rough, and wrong,
He sheaths a world of wisdom in his ears,
Yet seems no witch, and is what he appears.
A sleepy watcher, he must feel to see,
And, born to teach, may yet be taught to read;
Bound by an accident, he hates the free;
And, deaf and blind when Truth and Justice plead,
Led by a shadow, seems to take the lead.
How like a snake, all frozen but the fangs,
His coldness threatens and his silence chills!
How like a poisonous icicle he hangs
O'er human hopes, and on the soul distils
All mean, malignant, and infectious ills!
The freezing cloud descends in snow or hail;
The hill-born deluge floods the reedy fen;
And shall not lords teach slaves, and Heav'n turn pale,
And the grave shudder, at this crowded den
Of wolves and worms?—O Nature, are they men?
O Time, is this the island of the just
And the immortal, in her virtues strong?
The land of Shakspeare? Worthy of our dust,
Because she guards the right, and loathes the wrong—
The land of Ireton's bones, and Milton's song?
Rise, Bard of our Republic!—wherefore rise,
Like Samuel to the troubled King of old?
Could'st thou flash living fire in Britons' eyes,
Would pigmy souls be minds of giant mould?
Oh, what could wake these worse than dead and cold?
But thou, O Rock! that watchest freemen's graves!
Well may'st thou veil thy lofty brow in shade,
Scorning to look on boroughmongering knaves,
And game-law'd, corn-law'd, war-worn, parish-paid,
Rag-monied, crawling wretches, reptile-flay'd!—
What nameless curse comes next? Degraded Rome!
How like a Cæsar of thy days of shame,
He lolls behind his steeds, that ramp and foam
Through crowds of slaves, with long submission tame,
Hacks, not worth harness, void of tail and mane!
All praise to him, to whom all praise is due!
To him whose zeal is fire, whose rancour raves;
Sworn anti-catholic, and tried true-blue;
Champion of game-laws, and the trade in slaves;
Mouth of the bread-tax; purchas'd tongue of knaves;
All praise to him!—a menial yesterday,
And now a kingling, serv'd by hate and fear;
The upstart buyer of yon ruins gray,
That mock his tax-built pandemonium near!
Clerk! Thief! Contractor! Boroughmonger! Peer!
His mercy would be cruelty in hell;
His actions say to God, 'Submit to me!'
Dey of Starvation, dark and terrible!
Men's purses may submit to thy decree,
But why should conscience have no god but thee,
Thou charioted blasphemer? Hence, away
To Spain, or Naples, with thy loathsome scowl!
Why stay'st thou here, to fuddle tax'd tokay?
Go, be the Inquisition's holiest goul,
And gorge with blood thy sulky paunch of soul!—
But ye—poor Erin's cheerful exiles, born
To till the flint in unrepining pain!
Why bow ye to your foe, Hibernia's scorn?
This almoner, whom treadmills might disdain?
This pauper, worthier of the whip and chain?
Fools! let accusing scorn, in each calm eye,
Inform the tax-fed harpy and his hordes
That wrongs have brought forth thoughts which cannot die;
And that your wives have brought forth sons whose words
Shall sting like serpents' teeth, and bite like swords.
For what? Sad neighbour of the western star!
Land of the daring deed and splendid song!
For thee—whom worse than fiends, with worse than war
Aping base Cromwell, and his tyrant throng,
Torment for gold. Poor Land of deathless wrong!
Scath'd Eden of the vainly roaring deep!
Are these thy gods?—the lowest of the low!
Are these the wolves, who make thy millions weep?
These lords of dungeons, partridge eggs, and wo,
That think the lightning's ruinous wing too slow?
But—Isle of Tears! Hispania of the sea!
Mourner of ages, helpless in thy pain!
Still untransform'd, blood-weeping Niobe!
Mute, hopeless sufferer of the son-lov'd main—
Whom e'en thy own Fitzwilliam cheer'd in vain—
The dawn delay'd is nigh, the dismal morn,
The day of grief, without remorse and shame,
When of thy very famine shall be born
A fiend, whose breath shall wither hope, like flame;
Lean Retribution is his horrid name.
Behold his bare and sinew'd haggardness!
Behold his hide-bound arm, his fleshless thigh!
'Tis he! the fearless and the merciless!
I see his cheek of bone, his lifeless eye,
His frown—which speaks, and there is no reply!
I hear his mutter'd scorn, his taunting strain:
'Oppressor! hath thy bondage set us free?
Is all thy long injustice worse than vain?
Art thou, too, fall'n, scourg'd, trampled, weak as we?
What! hath our destitution beggar'd thee?
And can'st thou tell why plunder'd states are poor?'

II.

The wild words ceas'd, and o'er the blasted moor
Slow fled the form of that fierce regicide;
While shriek'd beneath my feet the granite floor,
From stream to headlong stream. But, eager-eyed,
I gaz'd on stately shadows at my side;
For buried kings, whose will, erewhile, was law,
Around me, like the ghost of Hamlet, kept
Their state majestic, arm'd! And when I saw
Their cruel faces bath'd in tears I wept.
But o'er my heart a deadlier chillness crept;
My white locks, every hair fear-stricken, stirr'd;
My limbs, all shaken, trembled every bone;
My pulse stood still! and in my soul I heard
The torrent, tumbling o'er the cold, gray stone,
Prophecy!—while the shadowy mountains lone,
That saw the Roman eagle's wearied wing—
Spake to the silence of the dead of old:
'King of the Poor! thou wast, indeed, a king.
But com'st thou sorrowing from the charnel cold?
Henry Plantagenet, the uncontroll'd!
Why? Did thy gracious servants bid thee reign
O'er bread-tax'd vermin, and transform thy name
Into a synonyme and type of pain,
Written o'er famish'd realms in tears and flame?
King of the People! royal is thy fame;
Thou need'st not blush.'—'First Edward! thou here, too?
King of the Kingdom, hail! But on thy brow
Why grows the saddening cloud? Is Peterloo
A nobler word than Falkirk? or wast thou
The nominee of kinglings, such as now
Ordain what shall be best for states and thrones?
Did men like them, when thou wast lov'd and fear'd,
Glut death with blood, and cover earth with bones?'—
'Third Edward! weepest thou? O prince rever'd!
Lord of the lance, to chivalry endear'd!
Still dost thou mourn the fall'n, the unrestor'd?
And was Napoleon, with his burning brain
Chain'd to the sunbeam, less to be deplor'd
On his hard rock, amid the groaning main,
Than captive John, with princes in his train,
Serv'd by mute kings and pensive victory?
But thou art not that Edward who gave laws
To wolfish anarchists. Thou less than he
Who tam'd the feudal beast, and pared his claws,
And tore the venomous fangs from rabid jaws,
And by and for the nation reign'd a king!
Dost thou, too, weep thy country's failing weal?
O doubt not that futurity will bring
For her a purchaser! The North hath steel,
The south hath gratitude; and slaves can feel—
What can they feel? the rankling of their chain.'"

III.

Our souls are lyres, that strangely can retain
The tones that trembled on their stricken chords;
And these, impress'd upon my heart, remain:
But the sad monarchs, leaning on their swords,
Vanish'd in darkness, with the closing words,
Like voiceless mists o'er ocean's sleepy waves.

IV.

What saw I next? A temple pav'd with graves!
Lo! on the floor a giant corpse lay bare!
And thousand, thousand, thousand, thousand slaves,
All dead and ghastly, kneel'd for ever there,
Statues of baseness, worshipping despair!
From many a battle-field and many a sea,
Cast forth by outrag'd earth and loathing tide,
They made a winter for eternity,
And seem'd like suppliant demons side by side,
For in their looks their crimes were petrified.
Bound by a spell, which ne'er, methought, would break;
Amid the dead I stood, the living one!
And, lo! the tears were froz'n on every cheek!
Ah, ne'er in solitude felt I so lone,
As in that crowd, whose tears were turn'd to stone!
The Titan corpse, sublime in stillness lay,
With marble looks, like power and pride asleep;
O God! its dreadful silence could dismay
More than the shriek of shipwreck o'er the deep!
And every lifeless form did seem to weep,
Gazing in tranced horror and remorse,
On the sad features of the mighty dead,
While, on the forehead of that giant corpse,
In letters of eternal fire, I read
This sentence: "I am he for whom ye bled,
Undying Death!—feast, Dogs, but lap no blood."

V.

Then, lo! what, distant, seem'd the ocean's flood,
Smote on my heart, with clamour fierce and foul.
Wave shouldering wave, they shook me where I stood.
No winds urg'd on the billowy, living roll,
But whirlwind dwelt within it, like a soul,
Heaving the foamy, roaring surges high,
While all beside was voiceless, breathless fear;
And, lo! the foam was human agony,
Alive with curses, horrible to hear!
The waves were men!—a deluge wide and drear!
And while, all raving, all at once, they came,
Heap'd on each other, to devour the shore,
The flash of eyes made heav'n's red vengeance tame!
The thunder dar'd not whisper to the roar;
When, with their multitudinous hands, they tore
The rocks, that seem'd to live in bestial forms.
Lo! frozen there, the tiger's terror glar'd;
Stiffen'd the startled folds of fanged worms;
Wolves grinn'd, like nightmare; glassy caymen star'd;
And the boar's tusk, his powerless tusk, was bar'd
In fear—a tyrant's fear! High over head,
The despot eagle ceas'd his prey to tear;
His mighty pinions not for battle spread.
But stretch'd to fly, and palsied by despair.
Oh, what a hell of silent pangs was there,
When, like an angel sweeping worlds away,
Did that resistless sea of souls assail
And crush his foes to dust, in dreadful play,
Rending the monsters and their granite mail!
Then all was hush'd! a sea without a sail!
And, black with death, a strand of gory mud!

VI.

The vision chang'd; and, lo! methought I stood
Where sinners swelter in the penal glare
Of everlasting noon! A fiery flood,
As of steel molten, on their nerves all bare,
Rush'd from the brazen sky; and scorching air
Burn'd upward from red rocks of solid fire.
There I beheld a statesman, evil-fam'd,
With unremitting and intense desire
To quench immitigable thirst inflam'd;
Stretch'd, moaning, on the cinderous marl; and nam'd,
In scorn and rage, by spectres pitiless,
Who bade him, smiting their clench'd hands, restore
Their homes, their innocence, their happiness;
And, in dire mockery, to his hot lips bore
Rags, steep'd in black, thick, slippery, burning gore.

But when he doz'd, worn out with pain, he dream'd
Of fire, and talk'd of fire that ever burn'd;
And through his frame, in all his vitals gleam'd
Fire; and his heart and brain, to cinder turn'd,
Still crack'd and blaz'd, while, tossing, low he mourn'd,
And from his eyes dropp'd tears of sable flame.
For now no longer in his fraudful brain
Schoon'd dreams of crime-bought good unting'd with shame,
False as the mists that loom along the main
With shows of golden Ophir, sought in vain
Where fiends of shipwreck watch their prey, and smile.

VII.

Yet seem'd he not the vilest of the vile.
An apparition cold of life in stone,
Or life in ice, drew nigh, with lips of bile;
A visage to the awed spectators known,
That turn'd to frigid rancour, like his own,
Their fiery hatred. Frozen where they stood,
Chain'd by his smile petrific, and his eye
Whose serpent keenness sadden'd while it blaz'd—
"Make way!" they yell'd, "the fatal fool draws nigh;
The dog of kings, their whip for poverty,
Seeks here the luxury of infernal tears."
Then shriek'd the prostrate wretch, as black he rose—
"Even here Democracy his standard rears!
Save me, my Brother, from unutter'd woes,
Worse even than Paine deserv'd or Ireland knows!"
"Thee? Aspect mean!" reply'd the new-arriv'd,
"Thee? And am *I* thy brother? Lo, on thee
I look with scorn—Driv'ler! whose fears contriv'd
To thrall arm'd kings, whom I was born to free.
And dost thou claim fraternity with me?
I blew not up a spark into a flame
That set the earth on fire: I drove no trade
In petty retail havoc: No! I came,
I saw, I conquer'd; and a world dismay'd
Found safety in my daring, that array'd
Slaves, who in freedom's fight like freemen fought,
And still are slaves." Then, turning to the crowd
Of silent spectres—who regarded nought
But him, such awe controll'd them—he, with proud
Scorn, read their abject fear, and cried aloud—
"Hence, vile Plebeians! know your lord," And well
The abject ghosts obey'd; for, while he spoke,
He rais'd his hand to strike; but, ere it fell,
Approaching sounds, that in the distance broke
Murmuring, arrested the descending stroke.
As, when black midnight melts from sky to sky,
And shriek the lightnings at the wrath of heav'n,
Air becomes fire, and, like a sea on high,
Wide whirlwind rolls his deluge, sear'd and riv'n,
While, with clos'd eyes, guilt prays to be forgiv'n,
So, sight shrank, conquer'd, from his visage frore,
That mock'd insulted fire with icy glare,
While seem'd the torrid clime to burn the more
As if incens'd, and sounds swell'd on the air
Which told of foes that knew not how to spare.
Soon, spectre skeletons, like wolves in chase,
Came howling on. As outstretch'd greyhounds fleet,
Some with riv'n ribs, and one with half a face,
They came, all hungry, and their clattering feet
Stamped on the soil of adamantine heat.
Then sprang they on him, and his muscles rent
With cranching teeth; and still their hate increas'd
As fast it fed, and joyful sounds forth sent;
Yet from the rapturous banquet oft they ceas'd,
Exclaiming, in the pauses of the feast,
"Ice-hearted Dog!—when fell the crimson dew
At Wexford, there we died!—In dungeons we!
We of slow famine!—We at Peterloo!
We, by the mercy of the scourge set free!"
Unvanquish'd by relentless torture, he,
While crisp'd in fire his cold flesh, scorch'd and torn,
Forgot not, though he wept, the bearing high
And proud demeanour of a tyrant born,
But cried, uplooking to the hopeless sky—
"Thou, who inhabitest eternity!
Here, too, thy frown is felt, thy mercy just."
But when those skinless dogs of hell had par'd
The bones of their oppressor, and, with gust
Infernal, crunch'd his vitals, till the bared,
Cold, burning heart, with pulses unimpair'd,
Shone in its grated chamber, like a light
That saddens some snaked cavern's solitude;
Then, pangs of deathless hunger in their might,
Wrung savage howlings from his soul-subdu'd;
And, thenceforth and for ever, he pursu'd,
Heading that dismal pack, the sentenc'd dead,
For food, for food! hunter of souls! with yell
Immortal, hounding on his fiends, while fled
Their prey, far shrieking through unbounded hell.
In ravenous ardour, sateless, horrible,
He champ'd together still his stony jaws.
O could the living heirs of fear and hate
See the lost trampler on eternal laws,
Taught by his voice of mourning, ere too late,
How would they shun his crimes to shun his fate,
And, e'en for mean self-love, be less than fiends!

BOOK VIII.

CONTENTS.

Ezra White unroofs the cottage of Hannah Wray, the widow of an imputed poacher.—He detects her and her daughter in the act of re-roofing their cottage.—He assaults the mother, and is killed by the daughter.—Imprisonment, trial, and death of Hannah Wray.

I.

Kind souls! ye jail the peasant, while ye plough [g]
The wild that lov'd to laugh around his home.
Where the broad common fed his father's cow,
And where himself, a fearless boy, could roam
Unquestion'd, lo! the infant rivers foam
No longer, through a paradise of fern!
Look how, like burden'd slaves, they steal through fields
That sullenly obey your mandate stern!
And how the tortur'd waste, reluctant, yields
Corn bought with souls, while soulless avarice builds
His palace, rafter'd with iniquity!

II.

Storm-smitten rock! and thou, time-wrinkled tree! [h]
Where is the sun-lov'd cottage that of old
Ye screen'd from envious winds? And where is he
Who dwelt in that lone cottage of the wold?
Far from the mountain bee he slumbers cold.
Thou, Enoch Wray, shalt hear the son no more
Who kill'd the harmless hare that ate his kale:
Atrocious crime! for which he sternly bore
Slow pain and wasting fever, in a jail.
He perish'd there. Then died his widow pale,
Who sleeps unsepulchred, and yet sleeps well.
But silly Jane, their child, still wanders here,
Seeking her mother on the stormy fell.
While freezes as it flows the scalding tear,
She lifts her left hand to her heart in fear,

And waves a fan of bracken in the right,
Forbidding evil sprites to melt the snow
That veils the fields once till'd by Ezra White.
Hark! how she grinds her teeth, and mutters low,
With black lips quivering—"God, let nothing grow!"
For Ezra White unroofed their humble home,
And thrust them forth, and mock'd the mother's wo,
Bidding her, with her brat, a beggar roam,
Or hire a hearth of him who feeds the crow,
Or to the Workhouse, hope-abandon'd, go.
"I to the Workhouse?—I?" the widow cried,
And from her shoulders ript the kerchief thin,
Displaying to the tyrant, elder-eyed,
A breast that might have tempted saints to sin,
While all th' impassion'd woman raged within—
"I to the Workhouse?" and her forehead burn'd,
And swell'd the tortur'd heart that would not break;
And her neck thicken'd, and her visage turn'd
Black, and she gasp'd, long impotent to speak:
I!—to the Workhouse? Rather will I seek
The welcome grave. But hope not thou to thrive!
Though, feeding on old crimes, and plotting new,
Thou yet may'st crawl, the meanest thing alive;
Here and hereafter thou shalt have thy due,
And this vile deed with snakes shall whip thee. Jew!
Am *I* thy tenant?—did *I* bid thee pay
The Squire my rent?—and are three pounds eleven?
Thou tyrant!—yet shall come thine evil day;
Yet shalt thou find there is a God in heav'n,
Although thy two fat farms have swallow'd seven.
God! see this glutton! how he crams and grasps,
Like death, for more—a beast of pray'r and prey.
Would all their maws were stuff'd with stings of wasps!
When shall I see them, on the bare highway
Toil, like their betters, for a groat a-day?
God! let him sow in vain! let nothing grow!
Be straw his harvest, grainless chaff his food!
To-morrow he will marry wealth and wo;
(Ah, Lucy Hargrove is for him too good!)
But may a mother's curse be on his blood!
May he die childless!" And she turn'd, and bent,
In passionate fondness, o'er her idiot child,
Weeping; then took her hand in haste, and went,
She car'd not whither, uttering curses wild;
But paus'd, and groan'd, while Jane look'd up and smil'd,
When Ezra's parting sneer shot through her brain.

III.

Morn rose, all splendid, o'er the frosty plain,
And Lucy Hargrove married Ezra White.
But Ezra strove to cheer his bride in vain;
Long stay'd the day, and linger'd long the night;
For Hannah's curse was on them like a blight.
The homeless widow seem'd to haunt their bed—
The idiot child to thunder at the door. [tread."
"They fire the stacks," he growl'd; "I hear their
"O give them back their cottage on the moor;
How canst thou prosper if thou rob the poor?"
Cold lay the moonbeam on the glittering rock,
When Ezra gruffly left his troubled bride;
His early steps alarm'd the wondering cock;
And the fox saw him on the dim hill side,
Plodding through molten snow, with cautious stride
And horrid instinct, hither. But, behold!
Here labour'd Hannah Wray, and silly Jane,
Fearless of blinding sleet, and blue with cold,
Busily roofing their sad cot again.
Flash'd Ezra's eyes, and rage fired every vein,
As when men wound a tiger. On he sprung,
And grasp'd the struggling widow by the throat,
Till white her eyes upturn'd, and forth her tongue
Protruded through retracting lips that caught
Sad hues from coming death, while anguish wrought
Terrific changes on her pensive cheek.
But Jane took up a stone, and smote his brow.
He fell, but held his prey; with strangled shriek,
He tried to heave his bulk, relaxing slow
His murderous gripe, and backward sank; then low
Dropp'd his large chin, and grim he gap'd in death!
But long lay Hannah senseless—happy she,
If, senseless, she had yielded up her breath.
But her eyes clos'd, then open'd—what to see?
She gaz'd on Ezra's corpse in agony;
Then on her daughter; and then gush'd her tears.
The horrid future on her spirit gleam'd;
She trembled with unutterable fears;
And, while the wan dawn o'er the mountains beam'd,
She clasp'd her daughter to her breast and scream'd—
"No, I can die! they shall not hang my child!"
Then came the hue and cry; the parting wild
Of sunder'd bosoms, ne'er again to meet;
The dungeon'd weeks; and hope, that never smil'd.
Yet once, in slumber, came a vision sweet,
Which bore her spirit to the dear retreat
Where still, she thought, her husband dwelt, and Jane
Still press'd the nipple, pillow'd on her breast;
The grave had lost its prey; the past its pain;
The dead had never died! But thoughts so bless'd
Could not endure. A darker dream oppress'd
The dosing captive. Not to see her die,
But dead, she thought, her child arriv'd, at last;
She saw herself a corpse; saw Jane draw nigh
Shrieking, to gaze upon that corpse, aghast;
And, shrieking, wak'd, with temples throbbing fast!
Then came the trial brief; the evidence
So clear, so false, so fatal; the sad eyes,
All gazing on convicted innocence,
But not in pity! her convulsive sighs,
Her sudden tears; the dread solemnities
Of sentence on the wrong'd and guiltless!—Oh,
Was there no pleader, by the laws allow'd,
To aid the sufferer in her hour of wo?
No—not a voice in all that awe-struck crowd
Was rais'd for her whom fate had stunn'd and bow'd;
For her, who *then* must plead, or ne'er again.
Dreadful, O Death, are all thy paths of pain!
And many a wretch hath felt, but who shall tell
What pangs unnam'd the convict must sustain,
Ere frailty, pale as snow, bids hope farewell,
And, for the living, tolls the passing bell?
Still, in her desolation, nightly she
Dream'd that the Lord had heard her earnest prayer;
Her child, she thought, poor Jane, was come to see
Her mother die, and beg a lock of hair,
Which she might kiss in tears and ever wear.
Dark roll'd the hours by cruel mercy given,
The waking hours of certainty and doom;
And, in her cell, she cried to earth and heav'n,
"O let my child sleep with me in the tomb!"
Tomb! I shall have none!" And the echoing gloom
Mutter'd, even when she slept, her heavy sigh.

IV.

As if no heart had ever ach'd, no eye
Shed bitter tears, another morn arose,
All light and smiles; but, with the brightening sky,
Hannah awoke from dreams of death, to close
Her eyes in dreamless and profound repose.

But Jane came not! poor Jane was far away;
She, though oft told, knew not her mother's doom;
But much she wonder'd at her lengthen'd stay,
With saddening thoughts, and cheek that lost its bloom.
Hark! the bell tolls! and yet Jane is not come!
"But she, who murder'd pious Ezra White,
And trampled on his brains," (so rumour lies,)
Ere minutes pass, must wrestle with the might
That none can vanquish. Lo! ten thousand eyes
Are gazing on the prison where she sighs!
The streets are pav'd, the house-tops pil'd with heads,
The windows choak'd with faces, anxious all
To look on all that man most hates and dreads.
Now the hush deepens near the fetter'd wall;
Now a dropp'd feather might be heard to fall;
Now, by the scaffold, hearts throb quick and loud;
Now, in dire stillness, hark, faint murmurs rise!
And, lo! the murderess bends above the crowd,
Bursting, with desperate strength, the cord that ties
Her arms, and rolling on all sides her eyes!
Chill'd, in a moment, chill'd is every heart.
"Where is my child?" she sobs; "My child!" she shrieks;
"O let me see my child, ere I depart!"
And long, for her who is not here, she seeks;
Then, to the crowd, with hands uplifted, speaks:
"Ye come to see a murderess? I am none.
A stainless conscience is my rock and tower.
'Tis true my foe to his account is gone;
But not for all this world's vain pomp and power
Would I have shorten'd his bad life an hour.
I die his victim, and die reconcil'd.
Kind hearts! ye melt—but which of ye will bear
A dying mother's keepsake to her child?
O for a kindred heart, my grief to share;
A kindred voice, to join my parting prayer!"
Lo! as she ended, on her bosom bent
A blind old pilgrim, who had left the throng
Weeping aloud, all pitied as he went!
She clasp'd him with a grasp convuls'd and strong—
She kiss'd him fervently, and held him long.
"God bless thee, Enoch, for this last good deed!"
She sobb'd—and down her cheeks the tears gush'd free.
"But we must bear whatever is decreed.
Nay, father of my Joe, be firm, like me!
Hold up! be firm, as innocence should be!
Guiltless I go to join thy son in heaven.
Jane, too, is guiltless, though she kill'd our foe,
Who, when he died, had need to be forgiv'n.—
Bear to my child this tress; a month ago
'Twas raven black, and now 'tis white as snow.
Yes, Enoch, I am guiltless. Let them pare
My bones, and make a mockery of my frame;
They cannot stain my soul! and I can bear
What must be borne. Why, then, should my sad name,
Whenever utter'd, flush thy cheek with shame?
Poor Enoch! where thy murder'd son lies low,
I hop'd to weep again; but hope deceives!
O might I rest with him!—no flower will blow
O'er me, no redbreast cover me with leaves!
This thought, despite my will, appals and grieves
My conquering soul, ere it take wing and soar.
Should one or two remember me in love,
Say I died guiltless.—Though we meet no mor
On earth, an angel waits for us above;
But thou shalt nurse awhile my orphan dove,
Far from the parent bird—when I am free!"

V.

And all is o'er—the shock, the agony,
The low-breathed moan of sympathetic wo.
But silly Jane, still wandering gloomily,
Wears on her breast the lessening lock of snow;
And still she mutters, "God! let nothing grow:
God! may a mother's curse be on their blood!"

BOOK IX.

CONTENTS.

England twenty years hence.—Secret sorrow and illness of Enoch Wray.—He takes leave of objects associated in his mind with the past.

I.

Hail, England of my Children!—not this den
Of vermin, and their victims, nick-nam'd free—
Isle of the Future!—will thy sons be men,
Or Corn-Law bipeds? Lo! I turn to thee,
Not hopeless in my fear. What wilt thou be
When forty, or when twenty years are past?
What will our children's sons in thee behold?
Will the next change be loathsome as the last?
Will souls be cheap that bodies may be sold?
Will pious lords ask alms and worship gold?
Will millions thrive by giving all to few?
Will Cæsar's image still take rag and fly?
Will Lethbridge and the Workhouse have their due? [i]
Wilt thou be Irish—Russian—French? or vie
With Turkey and Algiers in liberty?
Will harpies toll the rags which they deride!
Will purse-proud gods, ador'd with curses deep,
Awe dandy cowardice and beggar pride?
Will Famine's cellar'd fiends, too fierce to weep,
Like buried murder, grimly seem to sleep?
Will outrag'd Mercy's only Unforgiven,
Be circumcis'd of heart, and soul'd with stone?
Will Acres cease to curse the Sent of Heav'n?
Or tax our bread, that he may beg his own,
And be the wandering Jew of every zone?
Will Cantwell ride to heav'n on Satan's back?
Will root-fed wo thy soul-plough'd deserts till?
Will pauper mean Sir Bread-Tax, or Poor Jack?
Will plunder'd trade be capital and skill?
Will Glynn accept, when Rentless draws his bill? [k]
Will gamblers be thy merchants, chains thy wings?
Will beggary be thy wealth, thy hope despair?
Will every village have its leash of kings?
Or will the barren tree begin to bear?
Will Nimrod's mortgagee be Nimrod's heir?
And labour shout, "Richard's himself again?"

II.

Why is our father's look so full of pain?
What silent malady, what secret wo,
Weighs on his gloomy heart and dizzy brain?
An evil which he seeks, yet dreads to know,
Not yet assur'd, suspected long ago.
Hath the dark angel of the night, that still
Delights in human agony and tears,
Appall'd his slumbers with predicted ill,
And confirmation of his worst of fears?
The cause I tell not, but th' effect appears
In sudden alteration, such as oft
Comes on the unailing aged, when they seem
Strong as old eagles on the wing aloft.
Swift was the change and ghastly, as the gleam
Of baleful meteors on a midnight stream,
Blighting the waters. His Herculean frame
Stood, in the winds of March, erect and bold;
But when the cowslip—like a living flame
Kindled in April—burn'd its incense cold,

He seem'd the shadow of himself, and roll'd,
With a strange keenness, his benighted eyes.

III.

Bright shines the ice o'er which the skaiter flies,
Roofing the waters with transparent stone,
Firm as the rock, when umber'd evening dies,
But when the cloudy morn arises—gone.
So perish human glories, every one.
Oh, ne'er again, ye misty mountains dim!
When the frost parcheth on your sides the heath,
Shall its shrill histie whistle welcome him
Who once could see the tempest toss beneath
Your solemn brows, and to the vales bequeath
The vollied hail, from clouds of every hue.

IV.

The meanest thing to which we bid adieu,
Loses its meanness in the parting hour.
When long-neglected worth seems born anew,
The heart that scorns earth's pageantry and power
May melt in tears, or break, to quit a flower.
Thus, Enoch—like a wretch prepar'd to fly,
And doom'd to journey far, and come no more—
Seeks old acquaintance with a boding sigh.
Lo! how he weeps for all he lov'd of yore,
Telling to weeds and stones quaint stories o'er!
How heavily he climbs the ancient stile,
Whence, on the hill which he no more shall climb,
Not with a brief, albeit a mournful smile,
He seems to gaze, in reverie sublime,
Till heard afar, and saddening all the clime,
Slow swings from yonder tower the passing bell!

V.

There is a flower—the housewife knows it well—
A flower, which long hath grac'd the warm hedge side
Of Enoch's dying neighbour, Andrew Gell;
Whose spleeny sire he pummell'd for his pride,
Ere beauteous Mary Gold became a bride.
It is the flower which (pious rustics say)
The virgin-mother on her bosom wore.
It hoards no dew-drop, like the cups of May,
But, rich as sunset, when the rain is o'er,
Spreads flamy petal from a burning core;
Which, if morn weep, their sorrowing beams upfold,
To wake and brighten, when bright noon is near.
And Enoch bends him o'er the marigold;
He loves the plant, because its name is dear.
But on the pale green stalks no flowers appear,
Albeit the future disk is growing fast.
He feels each little bud with pleasing pain,
And sighs in sweet communion with the past;
But never to his lip, or burning brain,
The flower's cold softness shall he press again,
Murmuring his long-lost Mary's virgin name.

VI.

Deep in the vale, where, known to humble fame,
Poor Enoch's rival in immortal verse,
The Village Poet, lives—well skill'd to frame
The beauteous slipper, and the sonnet terse,
Wise to compose, and willing to rehearse;
A kind good man, who knows our father's worth,
And owns his skill in everything but rhyme;
Sage, too, and meek, as any wight on earth,
Save that he laughs at transitory time,
And deems his own a deathless name sublime;—
There, by the brook, cowers a low edifice,
With honeysuckled wall, and ivied roof,
A warm safe nest, in which two mortal mice
Might slumber through existence, far aloof
From city folks, whose sickly looks give proof
That, whatsoe'er is theirs, thou, Health, art not.
A dial, by our skilful father made,
Instructs the inmates of that little cot;
The masterpiece, which first his skill display'd,
When all to him their wondering homage paid.
Lo! on a visit, mournfully he wends,
To feel the dial, his acquaintance old;
But, by the way, in pensive musing bends
O'er ancient landmark, now half sunk in mould:
Shake hands, sad friends, for times are chang'd and cold!
But, lo! he enters at the garden gate!
Awhile in chat the rival poets stand:
He feels the bench, where oft in youth he sate;
The shed, which, long ago, he built and plann'd;
And now the dial is beneath his hand.
Ah, the slow shadow, measuring the swift hours,
While his touch wanders o'er the figur'd plane,
Baffles his patient finger's cunning powers!
But man, the shadow, mocks gray Time in vain!
Dusky, we pass away; he laughs amain;
His sportive trade it is to mow us down;
He plays at death, and is industrious too!
Thou dark and sorrowing mortal, yet unmown,
Weep—but thy sun-clock, as of old, is true!
Oh, better weep than do as others do,
Whose eyes discredit all save what they see!
But *thou* deny'st not beauty, colour, light;
Full well thou know'st, that, all unseen by thee,
The Vernal Spirit, in the valleys bright,
Is scattering diamonds over blossoms white.
She, though she deign to walk, hath wings of gold
And plumes all beauteous; while, in leafing bower,
The chrysalis, that ne'er did wing behold,
Though born to glide in air o'er fruit and flower,
Disproves the plume, the beauty, and the power,
And deems it quite impossible to fly.

VII.

Farewell ye mountains, neighbours of the sky!
Enoch will tread your silky moss no more,
But here he breathes your freshness. Art thou nigh,
Gray moth of April? On the reedy shore,
For the last time he hears thee, circling o'er
The starry flower. Broad poplar, soon in bloom,
He listens to thy blossomy voice again,
And feels that it is vernal! but the tomb
Awaits him, and thy next year's flow'rs, in vain,
Will hearken for his footsteps. Shady lane,
Where Fearn, the bloody, felt his deadly arm!
Gate, which he climb'd, to cut his bow of yew
From the dark tree of ages! Upland farm,
His uncle's once! thou furzy bank, whose hue
Is of the quenchless fire! adieu, adieu,
For ever! Thy soft answer to the breeze,
Storm-strengthen'd sycamore! is music yet
To his tir'd spirit: here, thou King of Trees,
His own hand did thine infant weakness set;
But thou shalt wear thy palmy coronet
Long, long, when he is clay. Lake of the Mill,
That murmurest of the days when vigour strung
His oary feet, farewell! He hears thee still,
And in his heart beholds thy banks, o'erhung
By every tree thou knew'st when he was young!
Forge!—built by him, against the ash-crown'd rock,
And now with ivy grown, a tussock'd mound—
Where oft himself, beneath the hammer's shock
Drew forth the welded steel, bright, blue, and sound!
Vale of the stream-lov'd abbey, woodland bound!

Thou forest of the Druids! O thou stone,
That once wast worshipp'd!—pillar of the past,
On which he lean'd amid the waste alone!
Scorner of change! thou listenest to the blast
Unmov'd as death; but Enoch travels fast.
Thatch'd alehouse, still yclept the Sickles cross'd!
Where died his club of poverty and age—
Worst blow of all! where oft the blacksmith toss'd
His truth-deciding coin; and, red with rage,
The never-silenc'd barber wont engage
In argument with Enoch! Fountain dim,
In which his boyhood quench'd the sultry beam!
School, where crown'd monarchs might have learn'd of him
Who sway'd it, how to reign! Cloud-cradled stream,
That in his soul art eloquent as a dream!
Path-pencill'd hill, now clad in broomy light!
Where oft in youth he wak'd the violets cold,
When you, love-listening stars, confess'd the might
Of earthly beauty, and o'er Mary Gold
Redden'd with passion, while his tale he told!
Rose, yet unblown! thou future woodbine flower!
Majestic fox-glove, still to summer true!
Blush of the hawthorn! glad May's sunny shower!
Scenes long belov'd, and objects dear, adieu!
From you, from earth, gray Enoch turns his view;
He longs to pass away, and soon will pass.
But not with him will toil and sorrow go!
Men drop, like leaves—they wither, and, alas!
Are seen no more! but human toil and wo
Are lasting as the hills, or ocean's flow,
Older than Death, and but with Death will die.

VIII.

Ye sister trees, with branches old and dry!
Tower'd ye not huge as now, when Enoch Wray,
A happy lad, pursu'd the butterfly
O'er broomy banks, above the torrent's spray,
Whence still ye cast the shadow of your sway?
Lo—Gray-hair'd Oaks, that sternly execrate
The poor man's foes, albeit in murmurs low!
Or, with a stormy voice, like that of fate,
Smiting your wrinkled hands, in wrath and wo,
Say to th' avenging lightnings, "Why so slow?"
Lo! that glad boy is now a man of pain!
Once more he totters through the vernal fields;
Once more he hears the cornerake on the plain;
The vale invites him, where the goldring builds,
And the wild bank that primrose fragrance yields;
He cannot die, without a sad adieu
To one sweet scene that to his heart is dear;
Yet—would he dream his fears may not be true,
And miss a draught of bitterest sorrow here—
His feet will shun the mill-dam, and the wier
O'er which the stream its idle brawling sends.

IX.

But, lo! t'wards Albert's mill the Patriarch wends!
(His own hands rear'd the pile: the very wheels
Were made by him; and where the archway bends,
His name, in letters of hard stone, appeals
To time and memory.) With mute step, he steals
Along the vale, but does not hear the mill!
'Tis long since he was there. Alas! the wave
Runs all to waste, the mighty wheel is still!
Poor Enoch feels as if become a slave;
And o'er his heart the long grass of the grave
Already trembles! To his stealthy foot,
Around the door thick springs the chance-sown oat.
While prune their plumes the water-hen and coot,
Fearless and fierce the rat and otter float,
Catching the trout in Albert's half-sunk boat:
And, pendent from each bucket, fat weeds
Their slimy verdure in the listless stream.
"Albert is ruined, then!" his quivering lip
Mutters in anguish, while with paler beam
His sad eye glistens. "'Tis, alas, no dream!
Heav'n save the blood of Enoch Wray from shame!
Shame undeserved, the treadmill of the soul!"
Thus Enoch mutely prays, but does not blame
Albert, who could not, well he knows, control
The fate that hurl'd him down to fortunes foul.
Triumphant Science! what avail thy deeds,
Thy sailless navy, and thy steam-drawn car,
If growing power to deeper misery leads?
If weeds and worms thy tenfold harvest mar?
And all thy fruits but fatten waste and war?
England is chang'd since Enoch was a lad.
Grubs dream'd not then that earth for them was made;
Men did not sweat to bloat the weak and bad,
In hopeless sorrow faithful though betray'd;
Nor was toil famine; nor was gambling trade.
Albert is strong, laborious, frugal, just;
But danger lurk'd where safety seem'd to be,
And cloudless thunder turn'd his hopes to dust.
While navies sank on fortune's sunny sea,
Unskilled to save his little barque was he.
In dreadful calm, the viewless storm increas'd;
Most fatal, when least dreaded, came the blow
That still was nearest when expected least;
And none who felt the stroke could see the foe;
But all was wondering fear and helpless wo.
The servant took the master by the nose;
The beggar'd master slunk aside to die;
Down dropp'd the cobweb Crœsus, stunn'd; he rose,
And fell again, he knew not how nor why.
Like frost and thaw in April's fickle sky,
The wretched rich, and not less wretched poor,
Chang'd places miserably; and the bad
Throve, while the righteous begg'd from door to door:
None smil'd, save knaves; but loudly laugh'd the mad,
Even at their prayers, and then they kick'd the sad.
And still men fought with shadows, and were slain!
For ruin smote, nor warning gave at all—
Unseen, like pestilence, and fear'd in vain!
But when red battle wings the whirling ball,
The cannon flashes ere the victims fall,
Loud bursts the roar, and then is heard the groan.

X.

What *is* this plague, unsearchable and lone,
Sightless and tongueless, till a wild voice howls
When nations die? What is this power unknown?
And whence this strange simoom that withers souls?
O ask the empire-swallowing deep, that rowls
Black o'er lost wealth and long-forgotten fame!

XI.

Shall *I*, lost Britain! give the pest a name (1)
That, like a cancer, eats into thy core?
'Tis Avarice, hungry as devouring flame;
But, swallowing all, it hungers as before,
While flame, its food exhausted, burns no more.
O ye hard hearts that grind the poor, and crush
Their honest pride, and drink their blood in wine,
And eat their children's bread without a blush,
Willing to wallow in your pomp, like swine,
Why do ye wear the human form divine?
Can ye make men of brutes, contemn'd, enslav'd?
Can ye grow sweetness on the bitter rue?
Can ye restore the health of minds deprav'd?
And self-esteem in blighted hearts renew?
Why should souls die to feed such worms as you?

Numidian! who didst say to hated Rome—
"There is no buyer yet to purchase thee!"
Come, from the damn'd of old, Jugurtha, come!
See one Rome fall'n!—another, mightier, see!
And tell us what the second Rome shall be!
But long, O Heav'n! avert from this sad land
The conflict of the many with the few,
When, crumpled, like a leaf, in havock's hand,
The great, the old, shall vanish from the view,
And slaves be men, all traitors, and all true!
Nor from the fierce and iron-breathing North,
That grimly blossoms with the sword and spear,
Call a new Alaric and his robbers forth,
To crush what worth is left untrampled here,
And shake from Freedom's urn dust still too dear,
While trade-left Thames pours mute his shipless wave!
But thou, our Father, journeyest to the grave,
A Briton, like thy sires, the fear'd of old!
Thou shalt not see outlandish king or slave
Conquer the green isle of the stern and bold,
That despots, erst, though leagued with hell, controll'd.
The land where Hampden fell and Russell bled,
Is yet no barrack for invading hordes;
Mary is undefiled, her boy unled
To slaughter, by their country's foreign lords.
Yet hast thou seen our fratricidal swords
Assail the bondsman, struggling to be free;
And strike for tyrants, destin'd, soon or late,
To thank our crimes, by which they reign, and be
Black vengeance to our hearths, and righteous fate.
But go!—no second spring can renovate
Thy blighted soul. A moment, big with wo,
O'er thee hath roll'd another hundred years.
Go, to the cottage of thy childhood, go!
Where green, as in thy youth, the vale appears,
And Mary's love awaits her sire, in tears.
Go to thy cottage—not with humbled look
And stealthy pace, a thing of guilt and fear!
But thou, alas, dependance canst not brook!
E'en pity now is insult to thine ear;
Fall'n is thy crest, thy heart is cold and drear.
Yet go thou to thy home, though daily there
Some little comfort is retrench'd; nor blame
The child, who veil'd her griefs her sire to spare.
"Though Mary is become an ill-starr'd name,
Why should her father feel the pang of shame?"
How often from thy side doth she retire
To weep alone! "Shall he who gave us all—
Shall Enoch Wray, the soul of fearless fire,
The good, the proud, become in age a thrall?"
Oh, not for this the lord of shroud and pall
So long hath pass'd him on his gloomy way!
No; he who hears the voiceless worm complain
Hath heard his spirit for dismission pray:
"O, let me, Lord, my God, till death, retain
My humble pride, a name without a stain!
When the flesh fail'd not, Lord, I lean'd on thee!
Though the flesh fails, let not my soul be mov'd!
But now release me, if thy will it be—
O let thy child rejoin the lost and lov'd!
For long on earth have I thy mercy prov'd,
And my heart yearns to bless thy name in heav'n."

BOOK X.

CONTENTS.

Horrors of paupery to independent minds.—Enoch Wray visits the churchyard, where he reads the grave-stones with his fingers.—Death of the Patriarch.

I.

Life! who would live, to be the helpless prey
Of sordid avarice? O neglected Age,
That, bedrid, lingerest in prolong'd decay!
Who would, like thee, a war all hopeless wage
With foes that mock his grief and scorn his rage?
How sad the sight, when, far from all he loves,
By crowds pursu'd, the slander'd terrier flies,
Till, wounded by his lord in unknown groves,
He mingles looks of love with piteous cries,
And, smiling on his dear destroyer, dies!
How terrible, to wake, interr'd alive,
And shriek for instant aid, which cannot come;
And scare the worm, that yet shall feed; and strive,
Beneath relentless earth, in airless gloom,
With desperate wrench, to dispossess the tomb!
More dreadful still, lost Captive, is thy fate,
To whom a grave is given, and death denied,
For life entomb'd by unforgiving hate,
Who bids despair, thy chamberlain, provide
Hope's coffin'd corpse, to mate thy sleepless side!
But direr, sadder than all these, is man
Wasted by want and superhuman toil;
Or fall'n from decent competence, and wan
With grief, and forc'd, while heart and brain recoil,
To beg a crust on his paternal soil,
Or ask his equals for a pauper's pay!

II.

But thou art not a pauper, Enoch Wray!
Free hast thou liv'd, in honesty and pride,
A hundred summers; bright hath been thy day,
Even in its gloom; and on the grave's dark side
Thou little hast to fear, and nought to hide—
Prepar'd to die, as good men wish to die.

III,

Hark!—like a spirit preaching from the sky,
"Repent ye, for the kingdom is at hand!"
An iron voice—as if Eternity,
Dethroning Time, sent forth his high command—
Speaks to the aw'd heart of the silent land.
From yonder tower, time-darken'd, thunder-scar'd,
Still the deep toll is floating on the air;
It calls our father to the lone churchyard;
Ah, many, many of his friends are there!
And Age, at five-score years, hath few to spare!
Thou antique Fane! that, in thy solemn suit
Of carven flowers, and stone-embroidery grand,
(Old, yet unshaken; eloquent, though mute,)
Tower'st like the sculptur'd guardian of the land!
Thy reverend looks what bosom can withstand,
And feel nor throb like love, nor chill like fear,
Nor glow like adoration? The leaves fall
Around thee—men fall with them; both are here;
While thou alike view'st bridal-robe and pall,
Sovereign of marriage and of funeral!
Witness of Ages, and memorial hoar
Of generations, to eternity
Gone, like the hour that can return no more!
Gray Enoch is a child compared with thee;
Yet man like him thou ne'er again shalt see!
How would it gladden thy bewilder'd eyes,
(Dusked with cobweb films, and colours old,
And with long gazing on dim blazonries,)
Could'st thou, in these degenerate times, behold
A pair like Enoch Wray and Mary Gold,
As to the altar, in their youth, they came;
He, like a warrior to the battle feast,
With cheek of downy light and umber'd flame,
A presence glorious as the bright'ning east;
She, bending at his side, with charms increas'd,

Like chaste Andromache by Hector led;
Her arm in his, her gentle eyes depress'd,
Her neck and face with burning crimson spread,
And lovely as maternal beauty's breast,
Beneath the soft cheek of her child caress'd,
Returning love for love and smile for smile!
But, oh, not now, thou venerable pile!
Comes he, with genial thoughts to rapture true,
But with sad heart, though not without a smile,
To bid his old remembrances adieu;
And, ere he mingle with the clay, renew
Feelings, which, when the dust that moulders here,
Could sympathize with animated clay,
Joy'd with its joy, return'd it tear for tear,
And, bidding sorrow look for brighter day,
Pointed to heav'n, but did not "lead the way."
Now on the tombstones, which of old he laid,
(Pages with silent admonition fraught,)
He kneels; and, in the twilight of thy shade,
Reads, with his fingers, what his chisel wrought;
Perchance th' effusions of his pensive thought,
Full oft recited in his soul with pride.

IV.

Beneath him rest five husbands, side by side:
Can aught disturb them? We, perhaps, shall see:
But why unite what death and fate divide?
"John Stot, Charles Lamb, Giles Humble, Simon Flea,
And Richard Green, here wait for, Alice, me!"

V.

Erect, like youth, stands this sepulchral stone:
But what is youth? a flower; and life? a dream.
Read!—for youth, life, the flower, the dream, are gone:
Read!—"Death is life! I *am* not what I seem:
Think of poor Henry still! but rightly deem."

VI.

The next is dateless; but, aged eighteen years,
Died she, whom hardest hearts have ceas'd to blame;
The kind still read her epitaph with tears:—
"Here rests a stranger—she had once a name:
Weep for the gentle dust that died of shame."

VII.

They did not lay his bones where four roads meet.
Although his crime was grief, which some called pride,
Wrong not the wrong'd, who slumbers at thy feet!
"Was Jones a coward? Honest, yet belied,
He was too brave to live disgrac'd, and died."

VIII.

In yonder grave heaven's grateful debtor lies,
Struck blind in youth—old Shiloh Hollischart.
"The beam of beauty left his cheerful eyes,
To glow more deeply, brightly, in his heart."
Read, mortal! be instructed, and depart.

IX.

"Tears for the slander'd! tears—but shed too late.
Come! if thou come to weep, traducer fell,
Whose slighted love hath done the work of hate!
But thou, perchance, hast yet more lies to tell
Of her who lov'd not thee, and lov'd too well?"

X.

But why hath Enoch grav'd on this lone tomb
The yeoman tall, who grasps, with amorous strain,
A snake, that feedeth on his fading bloom?
Read!—"I was friendless, and I liv'd in vain;
Cramp tore my nerves, and cancer gnaw'd my brain:
Yet, to the last, I pray'd for life, in pain."

XI.

This still retreat, thou faithful to the dead,
Claims thy attentive pause, demands thy tear!
Stop! read again th' inscription, often redd:—
"Remember me; and, weeping, linger here,
If still to thee thy Harcourt's name is dear!
But, if thou wed again, O come not near!"

XII.

A broken mast, a bursting wave, a child
Weeping, a woman frantic on the shore—
Rude stone! thou tell'st a story sad and wild:—
"Pain, want, unkindness, all 'afflictions sore,'
Disease, suspense, with constancy I bore;
My heart was broken—Letty lies with me;
And now we know that Matthew died at sea."

XIII.

No sculptur'd stone informs the passer by
That the poor clown is now the Squireling's peer:
Here lies a rogue, whose crime was poverty!
And just Sir Cornlaw sleeps in marble near!
Bones of the treadmill'd slave!—what do ye here?
Oh, shame to bread-tax'd England's bought-and-sold!
The loathsome wretch, who toil'd, and starv'd, and died,
And he whose merit was a robber's gold,
Repose, like married equals, side by side!
Audacious Death, is Mammon thus defied?
What, shall the parish-paid of yesterday
Rest with the sacred boroughmongering great?
Why fence ye not a Pauper's Golgotha,
Where, buried without bell, these dogs may wait
The crowing cock, while rich men rot in state?

XIV.

But to one grave the blind man's eyes are turn'd,
Move where he may—and yet he seeks it not.
He communes with the poor, the lost, the mourn'd,
The buried long, by all but him forgot:
The hated?—no; his bosom never burn'd
With fire so base: the dreaded?—no; he spurn'd
Fear, as unworthy of the human breast.
Why does he pause on his dark pilgrimage?
Hath he forgot what love remembers best?
O stoop and find, in this familiar page,
The mournful story, dearest to his age!
"Here Lucy rests, who, in this vale of tears,
Dwelt thirty weeks:—Here waits the judgment-day
Her brother James, who died, aged fifty years:
Here slumbers sinless Anne, who lived a day:
Children of Mary and of Enoch Wray."
His finger pauses, like a trembling wand,
Held o'er desponding hope by mercy. Lo!
Another line, cut by another hand,
On the cold stone, from which he riseth slow;
But it is written on his heart of wo;
"Mary! thou art not lost, but gone before."

XV.

Oh, no!—not lost. The hour that shall restore
Thy faithful husband, Mary, is at hand;
Ye soon shall meet again, to part no more;
By angels welcom'd to their blissful land,
And wander there, like children, hand in hand,
To pluck the daisy of eternal May.

XVI.

It is the evening of an April day.
Lo! for the last time, in the cheerful sun

Our father sits, stooping his tresses gray.
To hear the stream, his ancient neighbour, run,
Young as if time had yesterday begun.
Heaven's gates are like an angel's wing, with plumes
Of glorious green and purply gold on fire:
Through rifts of mountainous clouds, the light illumes
Hill-tops and woods, that, pilgrim-like, retire;
And, like a giant's torch, burns Morthern spire.
Primrosy odours, violet-mingled, float
O'er blue-bells and ground-ivy, on their wings
Bearing the music of the blackbird's note;
Beneath the dewy cloud the woodlark sings,
But on our father's heart no gladness flings.
Mary bends o'er him, mute. Her youngest lad
Grasps, with small hand, his grandsire's finger fast;
Well knows the old man that the boy is sad;
And the third Mary, as she hurries past,
Trembles, and looks towards the town aghast.
Enoch hears footsteps of unwelcome sound,
While at his feet the sightless mastiff lies;
And, lo! the blind dog, growling, spurns the ground!
"Two strangers are approaching," Enoch cries;
But Mary's throbbing heart alone replies.
A stern, "Good day, sir!" smites his cheek more pale;
A rude collision shakes him in his chair;
The Bible of his sires is mark'd for sale!
But degradation is to him despair;
The hour is come which Enoch cannot bear!
But he can *die!*—and in his humble grave,
Sweet shall his long rest be, by Mary's side;
And o'er his coffin (uninscrib'd) shall wave
The willow tree, beneath the dark tower's pride,
Set by his own sad hand when Mary died.
Though basely branded with a poacher's name,
Poor Joseph slumbers in a distant tomb;
Though Joseph's widow died a death of shame,
Still there was mercy in the old man's doom!
But now—dependance and disgrace are come!
"Albert," he sighs, "will perish by this blow.—
Where is he?"—No reply.—"And shall the throng
Of paupers see my daughter weekly go
For parish alms? No, Heav'n! I yet am strong;
Restore my sight! or I have liv'd too long."
The vain, vain wish, too mighty, leaves him faint;
His visage wan assumes a darkening hue;
The blind dog whines a melancholy plaint,
And ghastly roll his eyes of pallid blue;
E'en the hard bailiffs dread the scene to view.
Lyre of the past! O, art thou, then, unstrung?
The boy resigns his grandsire's finger cold;
A sweet word lingers on our father's tongue—
"Mary, dear Mary."—But the tale is told:
With her whose virgin name was Mary Gold,'
He hears, in heav'n, his swooning daughter shriek.
And when the woodbine's cluster'd trumpet blows;
And when the pink's melodious hues shall speak,
In unison of sweetness with the rose,
Joining the song of every bird that knows
How sweet it is of wedded love to sing;
And when the fells, fresh-bath'd in azure air,
Wide as the summer day's all golden wing,
Shall blush to heav'n, that Nature is so fair,
And man condemn'd to labour, in despair;—
Then, the gay gnat, that sports its little hour;
The falcon, wheeling from the ancient wood;
The redbreast, fluttering o'er its fragrant bower;
The yellow-bellied lizard of the flood;
And dewy morn, and evening—in her hood
Of crimson, fring'd with lucid shadows grand—
Shall miss the Patriarch; at his cottage door
The bee shall seek to settle on his hand,
But from the vacant bench haste to the moor,
Mourning the last of England's high-soul'd poor,
And bid the mountains weep for Enoch Wray!
And for themselves!—albeit of things that last
Unalter'd most; for they shall pass away
Like Enoch, though their iron roots seem fast
Bound to the eternal future, as the past!
The Patriarch died! and they shall be no more.
Yes, and the sailless worlds, which navigate
Th' unutterable deep that hath no shore, (m)
Will lose their starry splendour, soon or late!
Like tapers, quench'd by Him whose will is fate!
Yes, and the Angel of Eternity,
Who numbers worlds, and writes their names in light,
Ere long, O Earth, will look in vain for thee,
And start, and stop, in his unerring flight,
And, with his wings of sorrow and affright,
Veil his impassion'd brow and heav'nly tears!

NOTES.

BOOK I.

(a) *And landed pauper, in his coach and four,*
Bound to far countries from a realm betray'd,
Scowls on the crowd.

"A Pauper, in his coach and four!" Is there no longer any respect for high birth, the gradations of rank, and the privileges of the Aristocracy? In what catastrophe will the insolence of this generation end? For, alas! Jacobinism is not now confined to the rabble of any country! Has not the Grand Turk himself turned Radical, and lately destroyed the finest body of Tories in the world—his ancient, orthodox, and unalterable janizaries? But in this country, Liberalism appears openly in all places, flown with abominable knowledge. Nor does there appear to be any salvation left for us, unless the bread-tax-eaters can be induced to convene, and, with Lord Winchelsea at their head, give the Whigs two dips and a wallop each, in the huge steam-engine boilers of the detestable manufacturing districts. Positively, there is no remedy, but hot submersion. For your true Whig, or Radical, or whatever else be his revolutionary name, is a sort of cock turnip; he can bear cold pretty well, and he has no objection to a moderate degree of heat; but if you boil him, as you do your turnip, you will infallibly discover the heroic virtues which his modesty had concealed. The sickness of the State, I repeat, admits but of this cure; and there are persons who doubt whether the cure would not be worse than the disease. For those abominable Whigs, especially the town-dwelling portion of them, are very profitable stock; if they were all destroyed, rents would probably fall one-half, the estates would change hands, and the lords of the creation be ousted by money-lenders—low wretches engaged in trade.

BOOK II.

(b) *And soon faint odours, o'er the vernal dew,*
Shall tempt the wanderings of the earliest bee
Hither, with music sweet as poesy,
To woo the flower whose verge is wiry gold.

The flower here alluded to is the Polyanthus, "the poor man's flower," which never deserts his garden, until hope has deserted him. It is the Jacobin of the vegetable kingdom; and when it is transplanted into the gardens of the great, it loses *all* its worth.

BOOK III.

(c) *Kindly he greets the man of five-score years,*
The blind, the poor; while purse-pride turns away.

The few act after the manner of the few; and whenever wealth is synonymous with insolence, the great mass of the people are in a state of real or apprehended poverty. Hence the prevalence of purse-pride in England, where beggar-pride would rather be suspected of the plague than of any acquaintance with the rabble; and where destitution is so general, that to sympathize with the poor is equivalent to a sentence of banishment from the inestimable smiles of all the great vulgar. But in France, if an English nobleman were to give himself such airs as we witness here daily, in the freaks of every fifty-pound upstart, he would instantly be rolled in the mire. This is the first discovery made by the hideous tax-eater, when he crosses the Channel. Yet on his return for a fresh supply of the needful, he resumes a complacency quite as safe as that in which the despotism of Charles I. reposed, when he was supported and addressed by the whole nobility and gentry of a justly indignant nation, in whose hands, a few months afterwards, that crawling nobility, and those honourable gentlemen, were as vermin shaken from the mane of the horse in battle.

BOOK IV.

(d) *He died, where fell the free*
Of ancient Greece; and Greeks his loss deplore.

It is amusing to hear the sons of the serviles who sent Burns broken-hearted to the grave, *now* praising Byron for the only fault which he ever had in their eyes; but it is too bad when they exalt into a hero the coxcomb who would have gone into hysterics if a tailor had laughed at him.

(e) *Nor did the widower learn again to smile,*
Until his daughter to her Albert bore
Another Mary.

"Another Mary Green
Is come to Goldrill side."—*Wordsworth.*

BOOK V.

(f) *Bee! that hast left thy sandy-cov'd retreat*
Before the living purple hath purvey'd
Food for thee.

I am told by a friend, that my natural history is incorrect. But what I have seen, I can believe. On the 26th day of January, 1827, I saw the wild honeysuckle in leaf, and the hazle in flower; and towards the close of the following March, the wood-rose had kindled into full verdure, and the elm, the poplar, the willow, the celandine, the daisy, the windflower, and the primrose, were all in bloom; while the adder, the lizard, and the sand-bee, were rejoicing in the sunbeams.

BOOK VIII.

(g) *Kind souls! ye jail the peasant, while ye plough*
The wild that lov'd to laugh around his home.

What remuneration has been made to the poor for the commons or waste lands of which they have been deprived? It is no answer to say, that they had no *right* to the rent-free land which they occupied. They were in possession, and they are ousted; they were independent, and they are paupers. When the landholders complain of the poor-rates, they must not expect us to forget that the waste lands, falsely so called, were a national benefit, when the poor held them, and that they are now a nuisance and a curse. Let those gentlemen state the account fairly between themselves and their paupers; let them, in addition to some millions of taxed ploughed acres, pass to the credit of the poor what has been taken from them by the operation of Workhouse wages—by the fluctuations of paper-prices, and by taxes, the bitter fruit of our anti-Jacobin wars, and they will find that al the lands of England, if unmortgaged, would not pay the balance, which, before the eternal throne, stands at their debit. But a demoralized population, and a debt of eight hundred millions, are not the only results of our indulgence in the luxury of carnage. The Corn-Law is another proof of our having annihilated Jacobinism and French principles. Over it in embryo the hereditary ears had long been fondly shaken: but when the perfection of monopoly was born, how joyful were the pangs of parturition! how loud was the bray of Absolute Wisdom on the birth of the donkey of his dotage, so worthy of its father, and so like him! The thistles of old Scotland had a holiday on the occasion, and, to this hour, expecting to be food for man, disdain the approaching jackass.

(h) *Storm-smitten rock! and thou, time-wrinkl'd tree!*
Where is the sun-lov'd cottage that of old
Ye screen'd from envious winds?

I am no advocate for cottage beggary. But in France, since the Revolution, there are cottagers who are not beggars. Is it only in countries blessed with the British constitution, that cottager and pauper are synonymous? I think I can remember the time when the agricultural labourers of this country were not paupers. If I am mistaken, I beg pardon of "the gentlemen of England, who live abroad at ease;" for they cannot have degenerated from their ancestors, who, it would seem, watched over the interests of the poor with the same paternal solicitude which distinguishes their most Christian successors. Still, though the Rockinghams and the Savilles might be, like the Lansdowns and the Fitzwilliams, exceptions to a general rule, I am unwilling to believe that "the famous roast beef of old England," was always translatable into sixpence a-day, with bread at an average of about fortypence per stone. The Parisians talk of "Roast Beef of Pork," but what would they say to "Roast Beef of Potatoes?"

But whatever may have been the former state of our agricultural labourers, I can fearlessly declare, from my own knowledge and observation, that the little master manufacturers of the district around Sheffield, are in a much worse condition than they were twenty-five years ago. The hard-working and once-happy nailer or cutler—a freeholder, perhaps, still living in his *own* cottage, fronted by its lovely garden, can no longer keep up his credit as a tradesman. He might possibly pay his debts, by selling the freehold, and removing into the town, but that would break his heart. In the country he is something, for he is a freeholder; but what would he be in the dingiest hovel of the dirtiest town's vilest street? In a few years, if the Corn-Laws continue, the whole race of such men will have become paupers.

BOOK IX.

(i) *Will Lethbridge and the Workhouse have their due?*

That such men as Sir Thomas ought to receive parish-pay, I by no means think; that they deserve to starve, I will not say; but, that their advocacy of Corn Bills, if persisted in with success, will bring them to the Workhouse, I am happy to believe; and, if they *will* have it so, I shall be glad to see them there—the sooner the better.

(k) *Will Glynn accept, when Rentless draws his bill?*

Certainly, Glynn will not accept! and, certainly, in spite of the magic which I am told there is in the word rent, the bread-tax-eaters, if they have no hope but in monopoly, will become rentless.

But in what does the magic of the word rent consist? Can we conjure better with it than with any other word? A landholder, living on his annual rental, is precisely like any other annuitant. I suspect there is some fallacy in Mr Ricardo's famous theory. That in any over-peopled country, *blessed with a corn monopoly*, the demand for bread exceeding the supply, would cause bad lands to be cultivated, and good lands to rise in value, I can readily believe; but, if the theory of rent is true, land must be unlike all other things. Accordingly, it is attempted to be shewn, that land, being limited in extent, is therefore unlike all other things, and especially unlike the productions of human labour, which are produced in quantities proportioned to the demand for them. But land is of no value until there is a demand for its productions; and, consequently, that proportion of it which is not in cultivation is of no more account, at present, than the labourer who will be born a hundred years hence. I shall not ask whether *the capability of skill and labour to produce goods* is not, (*like the capability of the land for cultivation,*) philosophically, a limited quantity; but it does seem to me, *that the quantity of land actually in cultivation* varies with circumstances, just as the productions of skill and labour do; and, if so, the distinction between land and other things, with regard to limitation, is a distinction without a difference. Even if the last cultivable acre in the world were cultivated, my argument would still hold good; for the exertions of skill and labour have also their limits. That the iron ore in the bowels of the earth is precisely as limited in quantity as the surface of the earth is limited in extent, no man will deny; yet the limited quantity of the iron ore in the world does not prevent the iron ore, or the finished iron of Ulverstone, from being governed in price by the iron ore, or the finished iron of Russia and Sweden. *Give the English iron-master a monopoly*, and then, I grant, the theory of rent will *work well* in the mines of Cumberland.

(l) *Shall* I, *lost Britain! give the pest a name,*
That, like a cancer, eats into thy core?
'Tis Avarice——

That the too-famous anti-profit law, commonly called the bread-tax, was the cause of the late commercial crisis, and of all the speculation that preceded it, and that it is also the principal cause of our present distresses, no man, in his senses, doubts. It is not, then, at all wonderful, that the wisdom of our landholders, and the benevolence of their intentions, when they passed their self-denying ordinance, has not, hitherto, been even suspected. Perhaps none but the poet of all beggars could have made the discovery, that Messrs Protection, Clod, and Co. are not levellers, but merely Liberals; and that their aim is not Revolution, but only Radical Reform. If, however, there are still any persons who doubt the necessity of Parliamentary Reform, the Corn-Law, I fear, is destined to convince them, with a vengeance. Yet that law is worth the many millions which it costs us, if it do no more than demonstrate to the firm above named, that they must beware in future how they play at the game of war. Macchiavelli says, that the country whose people are compelled to pay a high price for their bread cannot maintain its independence; but to the Corn-Law we owe our knowledge of the precious truth, that no fully-peopled country can maintain its rank among the nations, *unless it untax its manufacturing industry, capital, and skill.* Very possibly, those profound men, Sir Locus Almoner and his great relations, were not quite aware of this when, with a paper lie in their hearts and parish-pay in their hands, they said to the plundered labourers—"Increase and multiply in numbers and in wretchedness for our honour and glory." But, if two and two are four, it is now certain that the Government of this empire *must* untax everything but land, if we are to pay a regiment of soldiers, or keep a ship of war in commission. In fact, the continuance of the Corn-Law is a sentence of paupery passed by the land-owners on themselves, or their heirs. Besides, if the Corn-Law should destroy our trade, and the agriculture of the country be unable, as it would be, to furnish even potatoes for the population, it is rather probable that fifteen millions of Radicals would not die of famine without making very odd grimaces, and uttering sounds which Nimrod and Tallyho could not easily mistake for the cry of a pack of hounds, though each of those gentleman might play his character of puss or fox, in the drama of retribution. These truths have long been obvious to all whose brains are near their eyes. But the brains of the landholders are in their bellies; and it is only through their pockets and their intestines that they can be made to understand anything. Yet let us hope that the time is at hand when labourer and artisan, shopkeeper and merchant, manufacturer and farmer—every gentleman who would weep to see our venerable institutions prostrate in the dust—every man who still respects, in spite of themselves, that noble body which has produced a Bacon, a Fairfax, a Russell, a Byron, and a Holland—will join in a yell of execration against the all-beggaring bread-tax.

BOOK X.

(m) *Th' unutterable deep that hath no shore.*

It seems beyond the powers of the mind of any limitary being to conceive that space ever had a beginning, or that it ever can have an end.

THE SPLENDID VILLAGE.

In Two Parts.

To Colonel Thomas Peronnet Thompson, who, next after Bentham, has by his writings done more good for mankind, than any other man since Adam Smith, this Poem is thankfully dedicated by his humble Pupil.

PREFACE.

If one-third, at least, of the nominal value of all fixed property in England is unreal, have we not among us a few little Grand Seigniors, who, like Lear in the play, "have pared themselves on both sides, and left nothing in the middle?"

Pardon us, Squire Mushroom!—For a quarter per cent. upon three-farthings, we know, you would sacrifice the best hopes of the human race for ever:—but, pray, are these fine houses your own?—"They are, fellow, every brick!"—So much the better for the money-lenders. But if you will deduct twenty-five per cent. from the cost-price of the bricks, seventy per cent. from that of the wood, and thirty-five per cent. from that of the labour employed in the construction of those tax-mortgaged villas, you will see, in the remainder, one of the results of the uses to which the steam-engine of James Watt has been applied in this country; and, perhaps, you

will then ask yourself whether that engine might not have been much better employed than in spinning taxes, paying for anti-Jacobin wars, and beggaring ourselves to set up our neighbours? Whether such a power ought to remain in the hands of those who have applied it to diabolical purposes, is a great question which the Giver of all Good, in his own good time, will answer.

When it shall be possible to go on a rail-road twenty miles to dinner, and return in two hours, who will give a thousand pounds for an acre of garden ground, merely because it happens to be situated within two miles of a large town? Or, when the Corn-Laws, and similar insanities shall have destroyed our manufactures, what will be the value of a suburban villa, which, in the year 1831, cost three thousand pounds? Gentlemen Mortgagees! you can count ten on your fingers.

Is there *any* safe investment whatever for capital in this country, except land let on lease, and on which fine houses have been built by sages, who patronize taxes on bread, and other anti-profit laws? If there be not, why does Squire Grub call us the rabble?

If wheat, like cotton-cloth, be a manufactured article, and if English cotton-cloth can be bought nearly as cheap at Calcutta as at Manchester, why might not Polish wheat be bought, with our manufactures, quite as cheap at Hull as at Dantzic? And when wheat can be bought as cheap at Hull as at Dantzic, what will be the value of an acre of *tax-ploughed* land anywhere in Noodledom?

If the lands of England be mortgaged to the amount of one third of their nominal value, and if the nominal exceed the real value by one-half, is not the monied interest, in fact, the landed?—and are not the landlords, with a few over-grown exceptions, mere tenants at will? If the landlords be mere tenants at will, why are they permitted by the proprietors to ruin a whole people? Are the mortgagees themselves ambitious of the glory of martyrdom in the holy cause of Big Beggar and Company? Thanes of the Splendid Village! the least of your insolvent gods is, in evil power, if not in purpose, more than a Guy Faux. Do not you furnish the gun-powder?—Listen to facts!

The city of Magdeburgh, which boasts a population of thirty thousand inhabitants, has a public garden of one hundred and twenty acres. This garden adjoins the walls of the city; and the land, which is some of the richest in Europe, with the river Elbe flowing through it, cost, planting included, four thousand pounds. The same quantity of land, very inferior in quality, could not be purchased at Sheffield, if at all, for twenty thousand pounds, unplanted. Now, what are the causes of this vast difference in the price of land at Magdeburgh, as compared with the price at Sheffield? The superior population and wealth of England cannot be the causes; for the population of Prussia is scarcely less dense than that of England; and though the Prussians are not blessed with Corn-Laws, or with paupers, great or small, they are making scissors at fourpence a pair, equal to Sheffield scissors at one shilling! What connection then is there between the comparative cheapness of land in densely-peopled Prussia, and the ability of the Prussians to undersell us two hundred per cent. in scissors? If the fair price of wheat be forty shillings per quarter, and the forced price in England sixty shillings, do we not lose one quarter by the purchase of two, and is not the loss a direct premium paid by us to our rivals, for our own destruction?

Thanes of the Splendid Village! think of these things! If you have been engaged since you arrived at years of indiscretion, in patronizing ruin by act of parliament; if your whole lives have been spent in sapping the very foundations of society, wonder not, should the floor of the social edifice sink suddenly beneath your feet, and the roof descend on your heads in thunder! But, if nothing less than the most horrible of catastrophes will satisfy you, persevere! You will soon find that your grand epergne, plated with sham silver, is *not* the palaced pauper's magnificent plate, bought with our sweat and blood; and that your poney-killing cab, with its scientific wheels, the triumph of Tory legislation, is *not* the coach and four, madly horsed by the bread-tax, to drag our domestic enemies down a precipice of their own making. If in your hearts you have always been identified with our oppressors, you should not have failed to tell them, after their Battle of Waterloo, that, by converting our customers into rivals, they would probably become vagabonds on the king's highway, *literally* begging their bread: seeing that a time would arrive when, if we could neither make a pair of fourpenny scissors for fourpence, nor continue to sell a pair of fourpenny scissors for a shilling, there would be laughter and weeping at strange tragi-comedies. We address not these words to you for our own sakes; we want not your assistance; we value not the thoughts of men whose thoughts are obsolete—but we could not stand still, if we would; move we must, and we can move without or with you; perhaps best without you. Still we respectfully beg leave to hint, that although your grand epergne is *only* plated, you really bought it with your own money; and that, but for the misdeeds of the Bashaws whom you have too long imitated and supported, that epergne would have been like the tankards of your honest ancestors—not plated, but massive and solid, as well as brilliant. Read, then, our poem; a poem not base, not servile, yet, strange to say, altogether British. Only in a sinking land, a land of taxation without representation, of castes and Corn bills, of degradation, cant, and misery; of wretched poor, and wretch-making rich; where destruction grows like a weed, and where capital and skill are alike profitless, could such a poem as, "The Splendid Village" have been written or conceived; but if wars and taxation, Corn-Laws, and restricted industry, the landlords and their victims, the degradation of our once noble peasantry, and the triumphant march of British capital, seeking profitable employment in foreign lands—if these are now the muses that inspire the poets of England, the fault rests not with the poet of trade and the rabble.

A few words more. An election is at hand; the counties have been divided for the especial accommodation of the landlords. If they will act wisely and honestly, we will advise our representatives to vote for a gradual extinction of the bread-tax. But if they make a factious cry of the Corn-Laws, we will ask them, in reply to their declaration of war, how many millions of acres of land they have stolen from the poor?—how many hundred millions sterling they have wrung from us in forced rents, since the Battle of Waterloo? and other similar questions, which all their possessions could not answer. In the meantime, we suggest, that an immediate extinction of the bread-tax, which their imprudence could not fail to ensure, would convert them all into hawkers of farms, in less than two years: why should it not? But, perhaps, they will be diverted from making a factious cry of the Corn-Laws, by a clamour for Pitt's inconvertible ones. In that case, they will stay at home, or consent to receive in

Paris fifty pounds for a hundred pound bill on England. If, however, they persevere and succeed, by their factious cry, in giving a few years longer life to the Corn-Laws, they will destroy the trade of England, and annihilate rent! They must then farm their own lands, and sell their wheat at Hamburgh or Amsterdam, for forty shillings per quarter, out of which they must pay twelve shillings per quarter expenses—instead of obtaining for it, what (with a free trade) they might probably obtain, namely—the average price of Europe, and the freight, and merchants' profit beside. Who will then be our landlords? Rather, who will keep their mortgagees? No matter—when we meet in the Workhouse—if Workhouse then will be—we will talk to them about the grapery.

PART I.

THE WANDERER RETURNED.

I.

Yes, ye green hills that to my soul restore
The verdure which in happier days it wore!
And thou, glad stream, in whose deep waters lav'd
Fathers, whose children were not then enslav'd!
Yes, I have roam'd where Freedom's spirit fires
The stern descendants of self-exil'd sires;
Men who transcend the herd of human kind
A foot in stature, half a man in mind.
But tir'd, at length, I seek my native home,
Resolv'd no more in gorgeous wilds to roam;
Again I look on thee, thou loveliest stream!
And, seeming poor, am richer than I seem.
Too long in woods the forest-Arab ran,
A lonely, mateless, childless, homeless man;
Too long I paced the ocean and the wild—
Clinging to Nature's breast, her petted child:
But only ploughed the seas to sow the wind,
And chas'd the sun to leave my soul behind.
But when hot youth's and manhood's pulses cool'd,
When pensive thought my failing spirit school'd—
Lur'd by a vision which, where'er I rove,
Still haunts me with the blush of earliest love—
A vision, present still, by night, by day,
Which not Niagara's roar could chase away—
I left my palace, with its roof of sky,
To look again on Hannah's face, and die.
I saw, in thought, beyond the billow's roar,
My mother's grave—and then my tears ran o'er!
And then I wept for Hannah, wrong'd yet true!
I could not—no—my wasted life renew;
But I could wiselier spend my wiser years,
And mix a smile with sinking vigour's tears.

II.

Sweet Village! where my early days were pass'd!
Though parted long, we meet—we meet at last!
Like friends, embrown'd by many a sun and wind,
Much chang'd in mien, but more in heart and mind.
Fair, after many years, thy fields appear,
With joy beheld, but not without a tear.
I met thy little river miles before
I saw again my natal cottage door;
Unchang'd as truth, the river welcom'd home
The wanderer of the sea's heart-breaking foam;
But the chang'd cottage, like a time-tried friend,
Smote on my heart-strings, at my journey's end.
For now no lilies bloom the door beside:
The very houseleek on the roof hath died;
The window'd gable's ivy-bower is gone,
The rose departed from the porch of stone;
The pink, the violet, have fled away,
The polyanthus, and auricula! [found
And round my home, once bright with flowers, I
Not one square yard—one foot of garden ground.

III.

With gun in hand, and insolence of eye,
A sun-burn'd menial, as I came, drew nigh;
By might empower'd small felons to deter,
Constable, publican, and warrener.
He met me, muttering—"I should know this tramp;"
He pass'd me, muttering "Vagabond" and "Scamp!"
And, as a beadle eyes a thief, he cast
A keen glance at the cottage, as he pass'd.
My brother dwelt within. 'Tis true, he took
My offer'd hand, but froze me with a look
So trouble-worn and lost, so hard yet dull,
That I shrank from him, though my heart was full;
I sought society, but stood alone;
I came to meet a man, and found a stone!
His wife, in tatters, watch'd the fireless grate;
Three boys sat near her, all in fierce debate,
And all in rags—but one constructing snares,
With which, at night, to choke Lord Borough's hares.
My sister, Rose, had parish-pay, they said,
And Ann was sent abroad, and Jane was dead;
And these misfortunes laid my sire beside
The mother, who in better days had died.
Such welcome found the wanderer of the deep!
I had no words—I sobb'd, but could not weep.

IV.

Well, here I am, resolv'd to view the land—
Inquire and ponder—hear and understand.

V.

The cucking-stool is gone, the stocks remain—
Why either or not both? Ye stocks, explain!
Chang'd scene! Unchang'd yon frosted tower remains;
Beneath the hill, it peers o'er vales and plains;
And, like a patriarch of the olden time,
Sees age around, but none like his sublime.
Ere yon huge house, with jail-like frown, displac'd
The wild briar roses of the thymy waste, [stool,
There, near the church, the stocks, and cucking-
Abode the sovereign of the village school.
A half-fac'd man, too timid for his trade,
And paid as timid men are ever paid;
He taught twelve pupils for six pounds a-year,
Made a consumption, and was buried here.
None said of him, he reap'd the crop he grew,
And *liv'd* by teaching what he never knew.
His school is gone—but still we have a school,
Kept by an ignoramus—not a fool;
For o'er his mansion, written large, we see
"Mister John Suckemwell's Academy;"
A boarding-school, where gentlemen are taught
To write fine copies, which the teacher wrote!
Behold the usher!—I behold and start!
For in his face I read a broken heart.
Servant of servants! brow-beat by a knave!
Why for a coffin labour like a slave?
Better break granite on the King's highway
Than earn, with Porson's powers, a pauper's pay
Why die to live? I know a wiser plan—
An easier too—black shoes, and be a man!

VI.

Village! thy butcher's son, the steward now,
Still bears the butcher on his burly brow.
Oft with his sire he deigns to ride and stare;
And who like them, at market or at fair?
King of the Inn, he takes the highest place,
And carves the goose, and grimly growls the grace.
There, in the loud debate, with might—with might—
Still speaks he last, and conquers still the right;
Red as a lobster, vicious as his horse,
That, like its master, worships fraud and force;
And, if the stranger 'scape its kick or bite,
Low'rs its vex'd ears, and screams for very spite.
"He hath enough, thank God, to wear and eat;
He gives no alms"—not e'en his putrid meat;
"But keeps his cab, whips beggars from his door,
Votes for my Lord, and hates the *thankless* poor."

VII.

Hail, Sister Hills, that from each other hide,
With belts of evergreen, your mutual pride!
Here reigns, in placid splendour, Madam Grade,
Whose husband nobly made a plum in trade;
And yonder glitters Rapine's bilious slave,
The lucky footman of a palac'd knave;
Stern foe of learning, genius, press, and pen,
Who lauds all laws that ruin honest men.
Sublime in Satrap-imitating state,
She for her daughter seeks a titled mate;
None other, not an angel wing'd from heav'n,
Could woo, or ask to woo, and be forgiv'n.
Too oft, perhaps, she calls her neighbour "Scrub!"
Yet justly scorns the mean corruption-grub;
For many a "ruptur'd Ogden" hath he wrong'd,
Long gloating on the captive's chain prolong'd.
He hates and apes her pomp, with upstart haste;
But what in him is pride, in her is taste.
She, queen-like, smiles; he, blustering, crams and treats,
And weighs his greatness by the trout he eats.
She never dogg'd a beggar from her lawn,
And he would hang all dogs that will not fawn.
Yet, Clerk of Taxes, Magistrate, and Squire,
Why to be Premier may not he aspire?
But what is he that haunts this upstart's door—
Yon fat, good fellow, who detests the poor—
Yon mass of meanness, baseness, grease, and bone—
Yon jolly soul, that weighs just eighteen stone?
Unmatch'd in quibble, great in If and But,
Sublime in cant, superlative in smut;
He jests as none but British worthies can,
Laughs at despair, spurns, tramples fallen man,
Condemns misfortune for its wrongs and wo,
And bids his victim thank him for a blow.
Sworn friends are they, Squire Woolpack and Squire Brush;
One is their creed—"Impoverish! torture! crush!"
Behold two models, unexcell'd on earth,
Of British wisdom, loyalty, and worth!

VIII.

Broad Beech! thyself a grove! five hundred years
Speak in thy voice of bygone hopes and fears;
And mournfully—how mournfully!—the breeze
Sighs through thy boughs, and tells of cottages
That, happy once, beneath thy shadow gaz'd
On poor men's fields, which poor men's cattle graz'd!
Now, where three cotters and their children dwelt,
The lawyer's pomp alone is seen and felt;
And the park-entrance of his acres three
Uncrops the ground which fed a family.
What then? All see he is a man of state,
With his three acres, and his park-like gate!
Besides, in time, if times continue dark,
His neighbour's woes may buy his gate a park.
O, then, let trade wear chains, that toil may find
No harvests on the barren sea and wind;
Nor glean, at home, the fields of every zone,
Nor make the valleys of all climes his own;
But, with the music of his hopeless sigh,
Charm the blind worm that feeds on poverty!

IX.

Lo! where the water-caster once abode,
The pinfold, erst his garden, skirts the road!
His ample cot, erewhile not ample call'd,
Is now with lath and lime partition-wall'd:
The humble dwelling of the leech divine
Makes six large styes for thirty human swine.
Oh! could he see what woes his house contains,
What wretched remnants cram its broken panes,
How would he swell with righteous rage, and ban
Ice-hearted Law's forc'd charity to man!
For warmer heart than his did never beat
Dup'd by himself, yet hated he deceit;
And, pleas'd, he taught my boyhood how to draw
The wo-mark'd cowslip, and the thrush-lov'd haw;
And how to make sweet pictures of wild flowers,
Cull'd in lone lanes, when glow'd the sultry hours,
Then press'd, and dried, and all on lawn dispread,
To look as infants do, that smile when dead.
Learned he was: nor bird nor insect flew
But he its leafy home and history knew;
Nor wild-flower deck'd the rock nor moss the well
But he its name and qualities could tell.
Yes, he was learned—not with learning big,
Like yon budge doctor of the whip and wig,
Who writes in Latin, sucks the sick select,
Speaks in the Babylonish dialect,
And drives his pair. Great man, sir!—all who thrive
Are cur'd of colds and cash, by Doctor Drive.
Behold his mansion, southward of the grove,
Complete with coach-house—piggery—alcove!
And, mark! the entrance hath an air of state—
Not copied from the lawyer's park-like gate!

X.

Two stone-throws from the Hall of Doctor Drive,
And from the village Workhouse four or five,
Where the swung Turkey, with its plumage rough,
Welcomes all loyal men who drink enough,
The flying curate lodges—doom'd to say
Three well-known sermons every Sabbath-day.
His donkey, like a rat without a tail,
Cost fifty shillings, and o'er hill and dale
Bears his lean master, at a hunter's pace,
Duly as comes his weekly steeple-chase.
The Rector—a queer plural, one and three,
Yet not quite singular in trilogy—
Who, scandal says, is cousin to my Lord—
Would pay him better, but he can't afford.
He lives, they say, in London, and so forth;
His country house is somewhere in the North.
Mine host much missed him when he left the lodge,
For fewer warrants summon Jem and Hodge.

XI.

Hail, ancient Inn! once kept by Margaret Rose,
Ere England's wrongs began, and labour's woes;
Inn of the Happy Village! where, of old,
Before the bright yule clog, my father told
His well-known story of the wolf and child,
While—not at him—the tickl'd youngsters smil'd,
And sturdy peasants, and the annual guest,
Prais'd the stout ale, but thought their own was best.

When Margaret reign'd, no wanderer pass'd thy door:
Dame Margaret's heart felt ever for the poor;
And, well they knew, to homeless son or sire
She ne'er denied a seat beside the fire,
Nor curs'd away the widow, stooping low
Beneath the double weight of age and wo.
But times are chang'd and alter'd is the inn,
For God is wroth, and Britain rife with sin.
The village, happy once, is splendid now!
And at the Turkey reigns, with knotted brow,
Stiff as a mile-stone, set up in his bar,
Vice-regal Constable and Bailiff, Marr,
Who nods his "yes," and frowns his fatal "no."
Wo to the scrimp that ventures near him, wo!
He, she, or it—"swag's nifle, skink, or trull,"
Shall find a bed, or Wakefield's gaol is full!
Great man, John Marr! He shoots—or who else may?
He knows my Lord, is loyal, and can pay.
The poor all hate him, fear him—all save one;
Broad Jem, the poacher, dreaded is by John.
To draw him drink, objects nor man nor maid;
The froth is brought, Jem winks, and John is paid;
For John, who hates all poachers, likes poor Jem,
While Jem, so kind to others, growls at him;
And when their fierce eyes meet, the tax-made slave
Quakes in his inmost soul, if soul he have,
Thinking of weasand slit by lantern light,
Or slug bang'd through him at the dead of night.
Yet great is he! rich, prudent, tried, and true:
He snores at sermon in his curtain'd pew—
He knows the Steward—he is known afar
To magistrates and bums—great man, John Marr!

XII.

Where yon red villa flares before the wood,
The cottage of my Hannah's father stood;
That woodbin'd cottage, girt with orchard trees,
Last left, and earliest found, by birds and bees:
And where the river winds, gnarled oaks between,
Squatter'd his drake, and diving ducks were seen;
While scooting hares oft sought this summit bare,
If lightning glinted through the glooming air.
But where dwells Hannah now? And where is he?—
Gone, like the home of her nativity.
And what vain dame, and what suburban Thane,
The site of Hannah's lovely home profane?
Who dash'd the plum-trees from the blossomy ridge?
From bank to bank, who threw the baby bridge,
Where the huge elm, which twenty bullocks drew,
Plank'd o'er with ash, and rootless, sternly grew,
While plumy ferns wept o'er the waters dark,
Sad for his fall; and, rooted in his bark,
A world of mosses forested the side
Of that fall'n Forest King, to soothe his pride?
What dandy Goth the heav'n-made arch displac'd,
To shew in painted spars his want of taste?
A mortgag'd magnate and a sage is he:
His maxims have a deep philosophy.
"Hateful," he saith, "and vulgar is the flat,
Who deigns to see a poor man touch his hat,
Or serves a beggar, though her curtsey fall,
Or of the rabble does not take the wall."
Squire Grub is proud—for pride and meanness blam'd,
Yet poor as proud, and of his wants asham'd.
Lo! there he struts—the silk-legg'd King of Cant!
Who thanks the Blessed powers for crime and want,
Prays to his Demon of Despotic sway
And hymns his God of Carnage! Let him pray!
Yes, pray for strength or weakness, to sustain
The weight of scorn that will crush in his brain,
Ere from the Workhouse, like a ghost, he go
To mate with madmen, in their den of wo,
And tell them that he is not poor—not he;—
But lord of vast estates—in Chancery!

XIII.

Path of the quiet fields! that oft of yore
Call'd me at morn, on Shenstone's page to pore:
O poor man's footpath! where, at evening's close,
He stoop'd, to pluck the woodbine and the rose,
Shaking the dew-drops from the wild-briar bowers,
That stoop'd beneath their load of summer flowers,
Then ey'd the west, still bright with fading flame,
As whistling homeward by the wood he came;
Sweet, dewy, sunny, flowery foot-path, thou
Art gone for ever, like the poor man's cow!
No more the wandering townsman's Sabbath smile—
No more the hedger, waiting on the stile
For tardy Jane—no more the muttering bard,
Startling the heifer, near the lone farm-yard—
No more the pious youth, with book in hand,
Spelling the words he fain would understand,
Shall bless thy mazes, when the village bell
Sounds o'er the river, soften'd up the dell:
But from the parlour of the loyal inn,
The Great Unpaid, who cannot err nor sin,
Shall see, well-pleas'd, the pomp of Lawyer Ridge,
And poor Squire Grub's starv'd maids, and dandy bridge,
Where youngling fishers, in the grassy lane,
Purloin'd their tackle from the brood-mare's mane—
And truant urchins, by the river's brink,
Caught the fledged throstle as it stoop'd to drink—
Or with the ramping colt all joyous play'd,
Or scar'd the owlet in the blue-bell'd shade.

XIV.

Churl Jem! why dost thou thrust me from the wall?
I hack no cab, I sham no servant's hall:
Coarse is my coat:—how have I earn'd thy curse?
Suspectest thou there's money in my purse?
I said, "Good day, sir," and I touch'd my hat:
Art thou, then, vulgar, as the Sage is flat?
Alas! that Sage sees not in thy fierce eyes
Fire-flooded towers, and pride, that shrieks and dies;
The red-foam'd deluge, and the sea-wide tomb;
The arm of vengeance, and the brow of doom;
The grin of millions o'er the shock of all—
A people's wreck, an empire's funeral!

PART II.

THE WANDERER DEPARTED.

I.

Dear Village! changed—how changed from what thou wert!
Thy good to bane thy beggar-kings convert.
They say that, discontented with our lot,
We envy wealth, because we have it not;
That, could we call yon glowing pile our own,
No wight alive would hear our tuneful groan.
They ask why writhes the serpent on our brow?
When prosper'd England as she prospers now?
They err. We envy not the pomp we see,
But hate that wealth which makes our poverty.
If talent thrive, and enterprise prevail,
Restore to rustic toil his beef and ale;

Be few, or many, splendid, as they can,
But let not misery make a fiend of man!

II.

Yes, splendid mansions now these shades adorn,
But wretched children in these huts are born!
There dwell the heirs of unremitting toil,
Who till, but not in hope, a teeming soil,
While Erin's hordes contest with them the plain,
And competition low'rs the price of pain.
What though proud homes their lofty roofs uprear,
If humble homes and comfort disappear?
O baneful splendour! that but glitters o'er
What may be ruin, and is bliss no more!
As beacon's fired on some far mountain's brow,
Shimmer o'er hamlets, black with plague, below,
Where health once glow'd in every fearless face,
And in the motions of all forms was grace—
I look on pomp, that apes a bloated crew,
While beggar'd millions hate the biggen'd few.
Like rocks of ice our fatal wealth is found;
Not like the sea that spreads those rocks around:
Hark! o'er their peaks a wild and bird-like wail
Tells of approaching thunder, fire, and hail!
Lo! at their feet, while cold and bright they sleep,
Mines hunger's fathomless and boundless deep!

III.

Feast of the Village!—yearly held, when June
Sate with the rose, to hear the goldspink's tune,
And lovers, happy as the warbling bird,
Breath'd raptures sweeter than the songs they heard,
Stealing through lanes, sun-bright with dewy broom,
By fragrant hedge-rows, sheeted o'er with bloom;—
Feast of the Happy Village! where art thou?
Pshaw! thou wast vulgar—we are splendid now.
Yet, poor man's pudding!—rich with spicy crumbs,
And tiers of currants, thick as both my thumbs—
Where art thou, festal pudding of our sires?
Gone, to feed fat the heirs of thieves and liars;
Gone, to oppress the wrong'd, the true, the brave,
And, wide and deep, dig Poland's second grave;
Gone, like the harvest pie, a bullock's load,
Four feet across, with crust six inches broad;
Gone, like poor England's Satrap-swallow'd store;
Gone, as her trade will go, to come no more!
Well, let it go, and with it the glad hours
That yearly o'er kind hearts shed cottage flowers.
Nor sisters' daughters now, nor sons of sons,
Shall seek the bridge, where still the river runs,
And bless the roof where busy hands prepar'd
The festal plenty which their fathers shar'd;
When, round their grandsire met, his numerous race
Beheld their children's children in his face;
Saw in his eyes the light of suns gone down;
And hoped they saw in his white locks their own.
No more, no more, beneath his smile serene,
The generations shall in joy convene,
All eager to obey the annual call,
And twang the cord of love that bound them all.

IV.

When daisies blush, and windflowers wet with dew;
When shady lanes with hyacinths are blue;
When the elm blossoms o'er the brooding bird,
And, wild and wide, the plover's wail is heard,
Where melts the mist on mountains far away,
'Till morn is kindled into brightest day;
No more the shouting youngsters shall convene,
To play at leap-frog on the village-green,
While lasses ripening into love, admire,
And youth's first raptures cheer the gazing sire.
The Green is gone! and barren splendours gleam,
Where hiss'd the gander at the passing team,
And the gay traveller from the city prais'd
The poor man's cow, and, weary, stopp'd and gaz'd.

V.

Where yon broad mansion's tax-built drawing-room
Displays its cornic'd-gold, dwelt Mary Broom—
Close by the marble hearth her garden smil'd—
The widow'd mother of an only child.
I saw her to the house of marriage move,
And weeping o'er the grave of hope and love.
Now, where the wo-worn and the weary rest,
The child is sleeping on its mother's breast.
Not long she mourn'd in duty's lonely shade—
No praise expecting—and she ask'd no aid,
But toil'd and faded silently, and stood
Alike unnotic'd by the bad and good,
Dropping meek tears into the sea of days,
Like a pale flower, that, all unseen, displays
Its pensive beauty on a river's brink;
While overhead the stars rush wild and wink;
And shadows, cast on earth at night's bright noon,
Move with the clouds, that chase the full-orb'd moon.
Oh, happy! with her own proud crust supplied,
In her own bed, a Britoness she died!
In her own shroud her modest state she keeps!
In her own coffin, gloriously, she sleeps!—
Not thus the brother of her soul will die;
O'er him, poor pauper, none will heave a sigh;
No windflower, emblem of his youth, be laid
To blush for promise in its bloom decay'd;
Nor, emblem of his age, and hopeless pain,
The dismal daisy of sad autumn's wane:
But Workhouse idiots, and the limping slave,
In four rough boards shall bear him to his grave.

VI.

Where is the Common, once with blessings rich—
The poor man's Common?—like the poor man's flitch
And well-fed ham, which erst his means allow'd,
'Tis gone to bloat the idle and the proud!
To raise high rents! and low'r low profits!—O,
To-morrow of the furies! thou art slow;
But where, thou tax-plough'd waste, is now the hind
Who lean'd on his own strength, his heart and mind?
Where is the matron, with her busy brow?
Their sheep—where are they? and their famous cow?
Their strutting game-cock, with his many queens?
Their glowing hollyoaks, and winter greens?
The chubby lad, that cheer'd them with his look,
And shar'd his breakfast with the home-bred rook?
The blooming girls, that scour'd the snow-white pail,
Then wak'd with joy the echoes of the vale,
And, laden homewards, near the sparkling rill,
Cropp'd the first rose that blush'd beneath the hill?
All vanish'd—with their rights, their hopes, their lands;
The shoulder-shaking grasp of hearts and hands;
The good old joke, applauded still as new;
The wond'rous printed tale, which must be true;
And the stout ale, that shew'd the matron's skill,
For, not to be improv'd, it mended still!
Now, lo! the young look base, as graybeard guile!
The very children seem afraid to smile!
But not afraid to scowl, with early hate,
At would-be greatness, or the greedy great;
For they who fling the poor man's worth away,
Root out security, and plant dismay.

Law of the lawless! hast thou conquer'd Heav'n?
Then shall the worm that dies not be forgiv'n.

VII.

But yonder stalks the greatest man alive!
One farmer prospers now, where prosper'd five!
Ah! where are they?—wives, husbands, children—where?—
Two died in gaol, and one is dying there;
One broken-hearted, fills a rural grave;
And one still lives, a pauper and a slave.
Where are their children?—Some, beyond the main,
Convicts for crime; some, here, in hopeless pain,
Poor wanderers, blue with want; and some are dead;
And some, in towns, earn deathily their bread.
All rogues, they died, or fail'd—'twas no great harm;
Why ask who fails, if Jolter gets a farm?
Full well thrives he—the man is not a fool,
Albeit a tyrant, and his landlord's tool.
He courses; he affords, and can afford,
To keep his blood, and fox-hunt with my Lord.
He dwells where dwelt the knight, for greyhounds fam'd,
Who also with the Satrap cours'd and gam'd;
The last of all the little landed Thanes,
Whose acres bound his Lordship's wide domains.

VIII.

Oh, happy, if they knew their bliss, are they
Who, poor themselves, unbounded wealth survey;
Who nor in ships, nor cabs, nor chariots go,
To view the miracles of art below;
But, near their homes, behold august abodes,
That like the temples seem of all the gods!
Nor err they, if they sometimes kneel in pray'r
At shrines like those, for God-like powers are there;
Powers that on railroads base no treasures waste,
Nor build huge mills, that blush like brick at taste,
Where labour fifteen hours, for twice a groat,
The half-angelic heirs of speech and thought:
But pour profusion from a golden hand,
To deck with Grecian forms a Gothic land.
Hence, yeoman, hence!—thy grandsire's land resign;
Yield, peasant, to my Lord and power divine!
Thy grange is gone, your cluster'd hovels fall;
Proud domes expand, the park extends its wall;
Then kennels rise, the massive Tuscan grows;
And dogs sublime, like couchant kings, repose!
Lo! "still-all-Greek-and-glorious" Art is here!
Behold the pagod of a British peer!
Admire, ye proud! and clap your hands, ye poor!
The father of this kingling was a boor!
Not Ispahan, nor Stamboul—though their thrones
Make Satraps out of dead-men's blood and bones,
And play at death, as God-like power will play—
Can match free Britain's ancients of to-day.

IX.

But me nor palaces nor Satraps please;
I love to look on happy cottages;
The gems I seek are seen in Virtue's eye;
These gauds disgust me, and I pass them by.
Shew me a home like that I knew of old,
Ere heads grew hot with pride, and bosoms cold;
Some frank good deeds, which simple truth may praise,
Some moral grace, on which the heart may gaze,
Some little hopes that give to toil its zest,
The equal rights that make the labourer blest,
The smile in which eternal love we scan,
And thank his Maker while we look on man.

X.

I dream'd last night of forests and the sea!
My long-lost Hannah! lives she still for me?
Is she a matron, lov'd by him she loves?
A mother, whom paternal Heav'n approves?
Perchance a widow? Nay, I would not wed
The widow of my rival's happier bed.
Nor come I to oppress her with my gaze,
Or bring disgrace upon her latter days.
Forgotten now, perchance, though once too dear,
I yet would sojourn near her—oh, not here!
For thou, sweet Village! proud in thy decline,
Art too, too splendid for a heart like mine!
In England, then, can no green spot be found
Where men remain whose sympathies are sound?
There would I dwell; and, wandering thence, draw nigh
Her envied home—but not to meet her eye:
Perchance to see her shadow, or again
Hear her soft voice, with sadly-pleasing pain.

XI.

I dream'd I saw her, heard her—but she fled!
In vain I seek her—is she with the dead?
No meek blue eye, like hers, hath turn'd to me,
And deign'd to know the pilgrim of the sea.
I have not nam'd her—no—I dare not name!
When I would speak, why burns my cheek with shame?
I join'd the schoolboys, where the road is wide,
I watch'd the women to the fountain's side,
I read their faces, as the wise read books,
And look'd for Hannah in their wondering looks:
But in no living aspect could I trace
The sweeet May-morning of my Hannah's face;
No, nor its evening, fading into night—
O Sun! my soul grows weary of thy light!

XII.

I sought the churchyard where the lifeless lie,
And envied them—they rest so peacefully!
"No wretch comes here, at dead of night," I said,
"To drag the weary from his hard-earn'd bed;
No schoolboys here with mournful relics play,
And kick 'the dome of thought' o'er common clay;
No city cur snarls here o'er dead-men's bones;
No sordid fiend removes memorial stones:
The dead have here what to the dead belongs,
Though legislation makes not laws, but wrongs."
I sought a letter'd stone, on which my tears
Had fall'n like thunder-rain, in other years;
My mother's grave I sought, in my despair,
But found it not!—Our gravestone was not there!
No, we were fallen men, mere Workhouse slaves—
And how could fallen men have names or graves?
I thought of sorrow in the wilderness,
And death in solitude, and pitiless
Interment in the tiger's hideous maw;
I pray'd; and, praying, turn'd from all I saw.
My prayers were curses!—But the sexton came:
How my heart yearn'd to name my Hannah's name!
White was his hair, for full of days was he;
He walk'd o'er tombstones, like their history.
With well-feign'd carelessness I rais'd a spade,
Left near a grave, which seem'd but newly made,
And ask'd who slept below? "You knew him well,"
The old man answer'd, "sir, his name was Bell.
He had a sister—she, alas! is gone,
Body and soul, sir! for she married one
Unworthy of her. Many a corpse he took
From this churchyard." And then his head he shook,
And utter'd—whispering low, as if in fear
That the old stones and senseless dead would hear—

A word—a verb, a noun—too widely famed,
Which makes me blush to hear my country named.
That word he utter'd gazing on my face,
As if he loath'd my thoughts, then paus'd a space.
"Sir," he resum'd, "a sad death Hannah died;
Her husband kill'd her, or his own son lied.
Vain is your voyage o'er the briny wave,
If here you seek her grave—she had no grave!
The terror-stricken murderer fled before
His crime was known, and ne'er was heard of more.
The poor boy died, sir, uttering fearful cries
In his last dreams, and with his glaring eyes,
And troubled hands, seem'd acting, as it were,
His mother's fate. Yes, sir, *his* grave is there.
But you are ill? Your looks make me afraid—
My God! how frightfully he shakes the spade!"

XIII.

Oh, welcome once again black ocean's foam!
England! can this be England?—this my home?
This country of the crime without a name,
And men who know nor mercy, hope, nor shame?
O Light! that cheer'st all life, from sky to sky,
As with a hymn, to which the stars reply!
Canst thou behold this land, O holy light!
And not turn black with horror at the sight?
Fall'n country of my fathers! fall'n and foul!
Thy body still is here, but where the soul?
I look upon a corpse—'tis putrid clay—
And fiends possess it. Vampires, quit your prey!
Or vainly tremble, when the dead arise,
Clarion'd to vengeance by shriek-shaken skies,
And cranch your hearts, and drink your blood for ale!
Then eat each other, till the banquet fail!
O thou dark tower that look'st o'er ancient woods
To see the tree of fire put forth its buds!
Baronial Keep! whose ruins, ivy-grown,
The time-touch'd ash mistakes for living stone,
Grasping them with his writhen roots, and fast
Binding the present to the faded past!
While, cropp'd with every crime, the tax-plough'd moor,
And footpaths stolen from the trampled poor,
And commons, sown with curses loud and deep,
Proclaim a harvest, which the rich shall reap—
Call up the iron men of Runnymeed,
And bid them look on lords, whom peasants feed!
Then—when the worm slinks down at nature's groan,
And with the shrieking heav'ns thy dungeons moan—
O'er the loud fall of greatness, misery fed,
Let their fierce laugh awake their vassals dead,
The shaft-fam'd men, whom yet tradition sings,
Who serv'd, but did not feed, the fear'd of kings,
To join the wondering laugh, and wilder yell,
While England flames—"a garden" and a hell.

XIV.

Again upon the deep I toss and swing!
The bounding billow lifts me, like the wing
Of the struck eagle—and away I dart,
Bearing afar the arrow in my heart.
For thou art with me, though I see no more
Thee, stream-lov'd England! Thy impatient shore
Hath sunk beneath me—miles, a thousand miles;
Yet, in my heart, thy verdant Eden smiles.
Land where my Hannah died, and hath no tomb!
Still in my soul thy dewy roses bloom.
E'en in Niagara's roar, remembrance still
Shall hear thy throstle, o'er the lucid rill,
At lucid eve—thy bee, at stillest noon;
And, when clouds chase the heart-awaking moon,
The mocking-bird, where Erie's waters swell,
Shall sing of fountain'd vales and philomel;
To my sick soul bring over worlds of waves,
Dew-glistening Albion's woods, and dripping caves;
But—with her linnet, redbreast, lark, and wren—
Her blasted homes and much-enduring men!

THEY MET IN HEAVEN.

I.

Through realms of ice my journey lay, beneath
The wafture of two pinions black and vast,
That shook o'er boundless snows the dust of death,
While over head, thick starless Midnight cast
Gloom on sad forms, that ever onward pass'd.
But whither passed they? O Eternity,
Thou answerest not! Yet still thy sable wings—
Silently, silently, how silently!—
Are sweeping worlds away, with all their Kings.
And still I wander'd with forgotten things,
In pilgrimage with Death, an age-long day,
A year of anxious ages—so methought—
Till rose a living world in morning gray,
And light seem'd born of darkness—light which brought
Before my soul the coasts of land remote.
"Hail, holy light, offspring of Heav'n, first-born,
Or of the eternal, coeternal beam!"
Through worlds of darkness led, and travel-worn,
Again I felt thy glowing, brightening gleam;
Again I greeted thine "ethereal stream,"
And bless'd the fountain whence thy glories flow.

II.

I waked not then, methought, but wander'd slow,
Where dwell the great, whom death hath freed from pain.
Trembling, I gazed on Hampden's thoughtful brow,
While Strafford smiled upon me in disdain,
And turn'd away from Hutchison and Vane.
There some whom criminals disdain'd; and all
Who, battling for the right, had nobly died;
And some whom justest men deem'd criminal,
Wond'ring, I saw—the flatter'd, the belied!
And Muir and Saville, walking side by side!
They wept—e'en Strafford melted, when I told
Of Britain's woes—of toil that earn'd not bread,
And hands that found not work; but Fairfax scowl'd,
While Cromwell laugh'd, and Russell's cheek grew red,
When, pale, I spake of Satraps bread-tax-fed.
Lo! as I ceas'd, from earth a Stranger came,
With hurried step—a presence heavenly fair!
Yet grief, and anger, pride, contempt, and shame
Were strangely mingled in his troubled stare!
And thus he spoke, with timid haughty air,
To Russell, Fairfax, in tones low but sweet:—
"I, too, am noble. England's magnates rank
Me with themselves; and when, beneath their feet
Fate's low-born despot, hope-deserted, sank;
When torrid noon his sweat of horror drank,
I join'd his name for ever with my own!"

III.

Him then to answer, one who sate alone,
Like a maim'd lion, mateless in his lair,
Rose from his savage couch of barren stone.
His kingly features wither'd by despair,
And heart-worn till the tortur'd nerve was bare:

With looks that seem'd to scorn e'en scorn of less
Than demigods, the Army-Scatterer came—
An awful shadow of the mightiness
That once was his; the gloom, but not the flame
Of waning storms, when winds and seas grow tame.
The stranger, shrinking from the warrior's eye,
On his own hands his beauteous visage bow'd,
Sobbing; but soon he rais'd it mournfully,
And met th' accusing look, and on the crowd
Smil'd, while the stern accuser spake aloud.

IV.

"Yet, Lordling,* though 'but yesterday a King,
Throneless, I died,' yet nations sobb'd my knell!
And still I live, and reign, *no* nameless thing!
I fell, 'tis true—I failed; and thou canst tell
That any wretch alive may say I fell.
Of worth convicted, and the glorious sin
That wreck'd the angels, now I owe and pay,
To wealth and power's pretended Jacobin,
Scorn for thy glory, laughter for the lay
That won the flatteries of an abject day.
When Meanness taught her helots to be proud,
Because the breaker of their bonds was gone,
Didst thou too join, magnanimous and loud,
The yell of millions o'er the prostrate one?
What cat out-mew'd the Cat of Helicon?
Yes, thou didst soothe my sorrows with an ode,
When stunn'd I lay beneath Destruction's wing,
And realms embattled o'er their conqueror rode.
Yes, when a world combined with fate to fling
A cruel sunshine on each vulgar King;
When fall'n, deserted, blasted, and alone,
Silent he press'd his bed of burning stone,
What caitiff aim'd at his sublime despair,
Th' immortal shaft that pierc'd Prometheus there?
Cat, and not vulture! couldst not thou refrain,
The laureate vile of viler things to be?
When 'Timour's Captive's' cage was rock and main,
What was 'proud Austria's mournful flower' to thee,
Thou soulless torturer of Captivity?
And what to thee, mean Homager of Thrones,
The sleepless pang that stung him till he died?
Tortur'd, he perished—but who heard his groans?
Chain'd through the soul, the 'throneless homicide,'
Mantled his agony in stoic pride.
While souls guilt-clotted watch'd, with others' eyes,
And from afar, with others' feet, repair'd
To count, and weigh, and quaff his agonies—
Like Phidian marble he endur'd, and dared
The Universe to shake what Fate had spared.
How fare the lands he lov'd, and fought to save?
O Hun and Goth! your new-born hope is gone!
Thou, Italy, art Glory's spacious grave,
Through which the stream of my renown flows on—
Like thine Euphrates, ruin'd Babylon!
What gain'd my gaolers by my wrongs and fall?
Laws prais'd in hell—not Draco's laws, but worse;
A mournful page, which history writes in gall;
A table without food—an empty purse;
A name, become a by-word and a curse,
O'er every sea, to warn all nations, borne!"

* If it be objected to these lines that the great bard is dead, so, I answer, is also the great warrior; and he who has honest and useful thoughts to express of either, or both of them, should do his duty Briton-like.

V.

Was it the brightening gleam of heavenly morn,
Beneath the shadow of his godlike brow?
Or, did a tear of grief, and rage, and scorn,
Down his sad cheek of pride and trouble flow?
He felt upon his cheek th' indignant glow,
But shed no tear, not e'en a burning tear.
The fire of sorrow in his bosom pent,
He gaz'd on Milton, with an eye severe,
On tranquil Pym a look of sternness bent,
Then, smiling on the humbled stranger, went
To laugh with Cæsar tasking Hannibal.

WHAT ART THOU, MIND?

To that true Christian and Patriot, the Reverend Henry Wrightson, this Poem is dedicated by the Author.

Grief, sages tell us, hath a drooping wing,
And loves to perch upon the shaken mind,
To which she sings notes like the muttering
Of wintry rivers in the wintry wind,
Till health flies wing'd away, and leaves behind
Shadows, illusions, dreams, and worse than dreams.
But Alfred dreams not—he is wide awake!
Light is around him, and the chime of streams;
Bees hum o'er sallows yet; and in the brake,
Coil'd like a chain of amethyst, the snake
Basks on the bank, above the streamlet's flow.
Oh, there are beauteous plumes, and many a bill,
And life, and love, beneath the ivy's bough!
The swallow dips his purple in the rill,
The lark sings in the cloud, and from the hill
The blackbird's song replies. But Alfred's ear,
Nor splashing swallow hears, nor humming bee,
Nor warbling lark, nor ivy shaken near
By brooding thrush, nor breeze-born melody
Of chiming streams. He listens mournfully
To accents which the earth shall hear no more!
What art thou, Mind, that mirror'st things unseen,
Giv'st to the dead the smiles which erst they wore,
And lift'st the veil which fate hath cast between
Thee and the forms which are not, but have been?
What art thou, conscious power, that hear'st the mute,
And feel'st th' impalpable? Thy magic brings
Back to our hearts the warblings of the lute,
Which long hath slept with unexisting things!
And shall we stand, doubting immortal wings,
In presence of the angels? Ask the worm,
And she will bid thee doubt; yet she is meek,
And wise—for when earth shakes, she shuns thy form,
But never saw the morning on thy cheek,
The blue heav'n in thine eye, the lightning break
In laughter from thy lips. So she denies
That colours are, even while the fragrant thorn
Blossoms above her! Weight, and shape, and size,
She says, are real; but she laughs to scorn
The gorgeous rainbow, and the blushing morn,
And can disprove the glory of the rose!—
Yet doth she err; our limbless sister errs;
For on thy cheek, O Man! the morning glows,
And fair is heaven's bright bow. The wayside furze
Discredits her; the humblest weed that stirs
Its small green leaves, can undemonstrate all
Her proofs triumphant, that celestial light
Shines not at noon. But though the sunflower tall,

And tiniest moss are clad in liveries bright,
Never, to her, canst thou disprove the night,
The starless night, in which she hath her home!
Then, marvel not, if death-bless'd spirits free
Wander, at times, beneath this heavenly dome,
On wings too bright for mortal eyes to see;
While, unperceiv'd by them, as both by thee,
Forms, more seraphic still, around us fly,
And stoop to them and thee, with looks of love;
Or vainly strain the archangelic eye,
To gaze on holier forms above, above,
That round the throne of heaven's Almighty move.
O look on Alfred!—look! the man is blind!
She whom he loved sleeps in her winding sheet,
Yet he beholds her with the eyes of mind!
He sees the form which he no more shall meet,
But cannot see the primrose at his feet!
They mingle tears with tears, and sighs with sighs,
And sobs with sobs, but words, long time, have none;
She looks her soul into his sightless eyes,
And, like a passionate thought, is come and gone,
While at his feet, unheard, the bright rill babbles on!

STEAM, AT SHEFFIELD.

To Charles Hindley, Esq., M.P., one of our creators of national wealth—who, while they enrich themselves, silently reproach the splendid drones of society, by increasing the productive capital of the State—I inscribe this humble Poem, wishing it were worthier.

I.

Well, gaze thou on the hills, and hedge-side flowers!
But blind old Andrew will with me repair
To yonder massive pile, where useful powers,
Toiling unconsciously, aloud declare
That man, too, and his works, are grand and fair.
Son of the far-famed self-taught engineer,
Whose deeds were marvels in the bygone days!
Ill it becomes thee, with ungrateful sneer,
The trade-fed town and townsmen to dispraise.
Why rail at Traffic's wheels, and crowded ways?
Trade makes thee rich; then, William, murmur not
Though Trade's black vapours ever round thee rise.
Trade makes thee sage; lo! thou read'st Locke and Scott!
While the poor rustic, beast-like, lives and dies.
Blind to the page of priceless mysteries!
"Fair is the bow that spans the shower," thou say'st,
"But all unlovely, as an eyeless skull,
Is man's black workshop in the streeted waste."
And can the city's smoke be worse than dull,
If Martin found it more than beautiful?
Did he, did Martin steal immortal hues
From London's cloud, or Carron's gloomy glare—
Light-darken'd shadows, such as Milton's muse
Cast o'er th' Eternal—and shalt thou despair
To find, where man is found, the grand and fair?
Canst thou love Nature, and not love the sound
Of cheerful labour? He who loathes the crew
To whose hard hands the toiling oar is bound,
Is dark of spirit, bilious as his hue,
And bread-tax-dy'd in Tory lust's true blue.
"Thou lov'st the woods, the rocks, the quiet fields!"
But tell me, if thou canst, enthusiast wan!
Why the broad town to thee no gladness yields?
If thou lov'st Nature sympathize with man;
For he and his are parts of Nature's plan.
But canst thou love her if she love not thee?
She will be wholly lov'd, or not at all.
Thou lov'st her streams, her flowers; thou lov'st to see
The gorgeous halcyon strike the bulrush tall;
Thou lov'st to feel the veil of evening fall,
Like gentlest slumber, on a happy bride;
For these are Nature's! Art not thou her's too?
A portion of her pageantry and pride;
In all thy passions, all thou seek'st to do,
And all thou dost? The earth-worm is allied
To God, and will not have her claims denied,
Though thou disown her fellow-worm, and scorn
The lowly beauty of his toil and care.
"Sweet is the whisper of the breezy morn
To waking streams." And hath the useful share
No splendour? Doth the tilter's cottage wear
No smiles for thee? "How beauteous are the dyes
That grove and hedgerow from their plumage shake!"
And cannot the loud hammer, which supplies
Food for the blacksmith's rosy children, make
Sweet music to thy heart? "Behold the snake
Couch'd on its bed of beams." The scaly worm
Is lovely, coil'd above the river's flow;
But there is nobler beauty in the form
That welds the hissing steel, with ponderous blow;
Yea, there is majesty on that calm brow,
And in those eyes the light of thoughts divine!

II.

Come, blind old Andrew Turner! link in mine
Thy time-tried arm, and cross the town with me;
For there are wonders mightier far than thine;
Watt! and his million-feeding enginry!
Steam-miracles of demi-deity!
Thou canst not see, unnumber'd chimneys o'er,
From chimneys tall the smoky cloud aspire;
But thou canst hear the unwearied crash and roar
Of iron powers, that, urg'd by restless fire,
Toil ceaseless, day and night, yet never tire,
Or say to greedy man, "Thou dost amiss."

III.

Oh, there is glorious harmony in this
Tempestuous music of the giant, Steam,
Commingling growl, and roar, and stamp, and hiss,
With flame and darkness! Like a Cyclop's dream,
It stuns our wondering souls, that start and scream
With joy and terror; while, like gold on snow
Is morning's beam on Andrew's hoary hair!
Like gold on pearl is morning on his brow!
His hat is in his hand, his head is bare;
And, rolling wide his sightless eyes, he stands
Before this metal god, that yet shall chase
The tyrant idols of remotest lands,
Preach science to the desert, and efface
The barren curse from every pathless place
Where virtues have not yet atoned for crimes.
He loves the thunder of machinery!
It is beneficent thunder, though, at times,
Like heaven's red bolt, it lightens fatally.
Poor blind old man! what would he give to see
This bloodless Waterloo! this hell of wheels;
This dreadful speed, that seems to sleep and snore,
And dream of earthquake! In his brain he feels

The mighty arm of mist, that shakes the shore
Along the throng'd canal, in ceaseless roar
Urging the heavy forge, the clanking mill,
The rapid tilt, and screaming, sparkling stone.
Is this the spot where stoop'd the ash-crown'd hill
To meet the vale, when bee-lov'd banks, o'ergrown
With broom and woodbine, heard the cushat lone
Coo for her absent love?—Oh, ne'er again
Will Andrew pluck the freckled foxglove here!
How like a monster, with a league-long mane,
Or Titan's rocket, in its high career,
Towers the dense smoke! The falcon, wheeling near,
Turns, and the angry crow seeks purer skies.

IV

At first, with lifted hands in mute surprise,
Old Andrew listens to the mingled sound
Of hammer, roll, and wheel. His sightless eyes
Brighten with generous pride, that man hath found
Redemption from the manacles which bound
His powers for many an age. A poor man's boy
Constructed these grand works! Lo! like the sun,
Shines knowledge now on all! He thinks with joy
Of that futurity which is begun—
Of that great victory which shall be won
By Truth o'er Falsehood; and already feels
Earth shaken by the conflict. But a low
Deep sigh escapes him; sadness o'er him steals,
Shading his noble heart with selfish wo;
Yes, Envy clouds his melancholy brow.
What! shall the good old times, in aught of good,
Yield to the days of cant and parish pay,
The sister-growth of twenty years of blood?
His ancient fame, he feels, is past away;
He is no more the wonder of his day—
The far-praised, self-taught, matchless engineer!

V.

But he is still the man who planted here
The first steam-engine seen in all the shire—
Laugh'd at by many an Eldon far and near—
While sundry sage Newcastles, in their ire,
Swore that a roasting in his boiler fire
Would best reward the maker. Round his form
The spirit of the Moors wrapp'd fold on fold
Of thund'rous gloom, and flash'd th' indignant storm
From his dilating eyes, when first uproll'd
The volum'd smoke, that, like a prophet, told
Of horrors yet to come. His angry scowl
Cast night at noon o'er Rivelin and Don,
And scar'd o'er Loxley's springs the screaming fowl;
For rill and river listen'd, every one,
When the old Tory put his darkness on.
Full soon his deep and hollow voice forth brake,
Cursing the tilting, tipling, strange machine;
And then the lightning of his laughter spake,
Calling the thing a "Whimsy."* To this day
A "Whimsy" it is call'd, wherever seen;
And strangers, travelling by the mail, may see
The coal-devouring monster, as he rides,
And wonder what the uncouth beast may be
That canters, like a horse with wooden sides,
And lifts his food from depths where night presides,
With winking taper, o'er the in-back'd slave,
Who, laid face upward, hews the black stone down.*
Poor living corpse! he labours in the grave;
Poor two-legged mole! he mines for half-a-crown,
From morn to eve—that wolves, who sleep on down,
And pare our bones, may eat their bread-tax warm!

VI.

But could poor Andrew's "Whimsy" boast an arm,
A back like these? Upstart of Yesterday!
Thou doubler of the rent of every farm,
From John o' Groat's to Cornwall's farthest bay!
Engine of Watt! unrivall'd is thy sway.
Compared with thine, what is the tyrant's power?
His might destroys, while thine creates and saves.
Thy triumphs live and grow, like fruit and flower;
But his are writ in blood, and read on graves!
Let him yoke all his regimented slaves,
And bid them strive to wield thy tireless fly,
As thou canst wield it. Soon his baffled bands
Would yield to thee, despite his wrathful eye.
Lo! unto thee both Indies lift their hands!
Thy vapoury pulse is felt on farthest strands!
Thou tirest not, complainest not—though blind
As human pride (earth's lowest dust) art thou.
Child of pale thought! dread masterpiece of mind!
I read nor thought nor passion on thy brow!
To-morrow thou wilt labour, deaf as now!
And must we say "that soul is wanting here?"

VII.

No; there he moves, the thoughtful engineer,
The soul of all this motion; rule in hand,
And coarsely apron'd—simple, plain, sincere—
An honest man; self-taught to understand
The useful wonders which he built and plann'd.
Self-taught to read and write—a poor man's son,
Though poor no more—how would he sit alone,
When the hard labour of the day was done,
Bent o'er his table, silent as a stone,
To make the wisdom of the wise his own!
How oft of Brindley's deeds th' apprenticed boy
Would speak delighted, long ere freedom came!
And talk of Watt! while, shedding tears of joy,
His widow'd mother heard, and hoped the name
Of her poor boy, like theirs, would rise to fame.
Was not her love prophetic? Is he famed?
Yea; for deep foresight, and improving skill,
And patience, which might make the proud ashamed.
Built by himself, lo! yonder, from the hill
His dwelling peeps!—and she is with him still;
Happy to live, and well prepared to die!

VIII.

How unlike him is Grip, the upstart sly,
Who on the dunghill, whence he lately rose,
Lost his large organ of identity,
And left his sire to starve! Alas, he knows
No poor man now! But every day he goes
To visit his nine acres, pitiless
Of him who tills the road, that shoeless boor
Who feeds his brother exile in distress.
Hark! muttering oaths, he wonders why our poor
Are not all Irish! Eyeing, then, the moor,
He swears, if he were king, what he would do!
Our corn-importing rogues should have a fall;
For he would plough the rocks, and trench them too.
And then of bloody papists doth he bawl;
If he were king, he'd (damn them!) shoot them all.
And then he quotes the Duke! and sagely thinks
That princes should be loyal to the throne.

* When the steam-engine (not Watt's) was first employed in drawing coals from mines, it was nicknamed a "Whimsy," by the admirers of the wisdom of our ancestors; and to this day, that description of steam-engine is called a "Whimsy," in the coal districts.

* The colliers are all weasel-backed, in consequence of the position in which they work.

And then he talks of privilege—and winks:
Game he can't eat, he hints; but kills his own.
And then he calls the land a marrow bone,
Which tradesmen suck; for he no longer trades,
But talks of traffic with defensive sneer.
Full deeply is he learn'd in modes and grades,
And condescends to think my Lord his peer!
Yet, lo! he noddeth at the engineer—
Grins at the "fellow"—grunts—and lounges on!

KERHONAH.

A Drama.

To EDWARD LYTTON BULWER, Esq., M.P., in humble thankfulness for his advocacy of free theatricals, I inscribe this Drama.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

KERHONAH, King of the Maspataquas.
NAMBISSA, his wife.
NIDANISS, his daughter.
TORONTO and MASKATE, his sons.
WABANG, King of the Mohawks.
OKIMA, his son.
ACHONDA, a Priest of the Mohawks.
DIXWELL, the supposed executioner of King Charles I.
MORTON, an Englishman in authority, settled in New England.
MARY, his wife, daughter of DIXWELL.
WARD and GOFFE, emigrants from England.
ELLIOT, an Englishman, translator of the Bible into the Indian language, and called the Apostle of the Indians.

SCENE I.—*Inside of a Cavern, near the banks of the Connecticut.*—DIXWELL *sleeping.*—*Enter* MARY.

Mary. Troubled in sleep, my father? and because
I came not as I promised? Poor old man!
Dix. Forgiveness! oh, forgiveness and a grave!
Mary. God knows thy heart, my father! and I shudder
To think what thou perchance hast acted.
Dix. Oh!
Mary. No common load of wo is thine, my father.
He weeps. Flow on, ye soothers of the soul!
What dreadful gestures! Is he dying? Help!
Dix. Away, thou headless trunk! away!
Mary. What means he?
Dix. Ha! can the separated trunk rejoin
The governing head?—and art thou whole again?
Mary. Know'st thou not me?
Dix. Thy hue is of the earth;
Thine eyes are fang'd with lightnings.
Mary. He is dreaming.
Dix. It is thy unreality I fear,
And not thine arm. Hence, spectre, to thy shroud.
Mary. Shake off this phantasy.
Dix. Detain me not,
And I will give thee gold. Thou too a rebel!
I doff'd my hose, for blood was on them.
Mary. Blood?
Dix. Alas! 'tis on my heart!
Mary. Blood!
Dix. (*Whispers.*) 'Tis the King's.
Mary. O Heav'n!
Dix. Didst hear his words?
Mary. No, I heard thine.
Dix. Come, let us pray. Didst thou behold it too?
Mary. I beheld nothing.
Dix. Nothing? 'Twas the King!
His eyes spake horrors. Oh, thou must not know them!
Pale as thy cheek, he rushed into the earth.
Mary. He is delirious.
Dix. Oh, I faint, I die!
Mary! my child!
Mary. What would you, sir?
Dix. Thank Heav'n
'Twas but a dream! What said I in my sleep?
I dreamed of horrors! but believe not thou
The words of agony. What said I, child?
That—I was—the—King's executioner?
Mary. Alas! alas! But I must hence, my father!
My heart is chill'd with terrible forebodings:—
Thou art proclaim'd a traitor, and a price
Is set upon thy head. Would I had never
Known thee to be my father, but still lived
A happy orphan! for I can no longer
Conceal thee here. I visit thee by stealth,
And not unwatch'd. My husband too suspects me.
Oh, how I long to laugh, and tell him all,
And kiss suspicion from his sorrowing face,
And lead thee home with me! But loyalty
In him is passion! He would hate even me,
If deemed the daughter of a regicide;
And he the executioner of Charles!
Thou must away, my father, instantly!
Lo! I have brought thee arms—a sword and pistols;
My husband will not miss them; and this garb,
Such as the Maspataquas wear, will screen thee
From all eyes but Suspicion's. Put it on,
And quit this cave, and hide thee in the woods—
The summer woods—where, in their glory now,
The hickory, the sumach, the red maple,
The fringe-tree, and th' acacia triple-thorned,
Temper the ardour of the burning sun,
And on the locust's violet-breathing flowers,
Cast the pale yellow of his meekened fire.
The Indian war, that girds us round with perils,
Will be to thee protection, hope, and safety.
So put these garments on, and be not slow.
Nay, not a word, my father—not a word!
Haste! We shall meet again in better times.
[*Exit* MARY.]

SCENE II.—*The Wilderness.*—KERHONAH *busied in making a grave.*—NIDANISS *bending over the bodies of* NAMBISSA *and* MASKATE.

Ker. (*Comes forward.*) Art thou, too, leagued
with these detested Whites,
Yehoway! Dost thou too, like feeble man,
Smile only on the strong and fortunate?
Dost thou contemn Kerhonah in distress,
And scorn to cast one glance of thy bright eye
On this poor grave of my slain wife and son?
All gloom! no brightness yet! My child! He turns
His face away, but not, perchance, in rage;
He will not look upon Kerhonah's shame.

Nid. See! lovely as on loveliest living flower,
The dew, that weepeth on thy son's stark cheek,
Impearleth mournfully his mother's hair,
And damps the lip, half-closed, as if to speak!
Or touch'd to seek our kindred uninterr'd,
Perchance the spirits of the night have come,
With sadly pleasing tears, and watched the dead.
Ker. I thank you, spirits! ye respect us still—
But mournfully—not proudly, as of old,
When fear'd, we dwelt with you, and talked with you,
And in your dreadless majesty partook,
And were of you a part, and of your clouds,
And of your cloudy forests—till the White Men
Silenced Yehoway's thunders with their own,
And with his tremblings shook this land and us.
[*They place the bodies in the grave.*]
Nid. The war in which thou diedst was caused by me:
My guilt did slay thee, brother! I have brought
Destruction upon all my friends. Forgive
Thy wretched sister!
Ker. Rest thou here, my son!
Here, mother of my children, rest! Your grave
Was made in haste and terror; 'tis the best
That we can give you.
Nid. O that I had died
A suckled baby at thy breast, my mother!
I had not been thus guilty, not thus wretched,
Not thus abhorred!
Ker. Sleep with thy warrior son,
Nambissa, undisturb'd. Ye *have* a grave.
No foe shall laugh at your insulted bones;
Nor shall your spirits scare the night with shrieks;
Nor with mute sadness, when we meet above,
Upbraid my arm—although I fought in vain.
Nid. My guilty passion for the white priest, Elliot,
Brought ruin down upon the Maspataquas.
I, therefore, hated, live bereft of thee,
Thou dearest brother of my soul! Oh, thou,
Thou gentle as a child, wast brave as fire!
And when Toronto spurn'd me to the earth,
And harshly bade me to the White Men go—
Because my love brought down upon the nation
The just ire of the ever-watchful gods—
Thou still, my brother, didst, with sweetest words,
Speak to my heart, and rush to meet my tears,
That ever started at thy voice of kindness.
And therefore will I mourn thee evermore,
Until myself lie cold in earth unwept.
Who will lament for poor Nidaniss? None;
For thou alone didst love me! What remains,
My brother! but to think of thee and weep,
And wish that I were cold in earth with thee?
Ker. Child, we can die, or talk of death to-morrow.
Enough of tears, but not enough of blood;
Come Vengeance first! then Death come when he will.
Nid. Talk'st thou of vengeance yet?
Ker. Do I not live?
Nid. Thy question is a tale told well and briefly:—
We live—for what?—to envy those who died.
Life, wretched life is all.
Ker. It *is* not all.
What though I call no more around their chief
Thousands, expert to hurl the assagay,
Or wing the hungry hatchet on the Whites,
As when the midnight angel scaled their walls,
And fiends of fire held dances in their chambers?
Think not Yehoway will forsake his cause;
I cherish still the thirst which blood must slake.
Nid. Whose blood?—Thy own? None else is left to shed.
Thy warrior sons are stiff and cold.
Ker. Toronto,
Our eldest, lives.
Nid. Lives?—father! oh, where—where?
Ker. Last night, I sent him to our friends, the Mohawks.
Nid. And hath calamity so humbled thee,
That thou canst call our direst foes thy friends?
Ker. They are Red Men.
Nid. And, therefore, are they friends?
Ker. Thou smitest me on the breaking heart with words!
Oh! had we fought like brethren, side by side,
And as one man united met the foe,
The treacherous Whites had long since ceased to breathe!
But they shall join us now, and well avenge
My people's blood. To-morrow will we enter
Their country. Thou, Nidaniss, there wilt find
A husband; there my bravest boy shall find
Wives worthy of him. Die, Kerhonah, then;
But be't in battle, and not unavenged!
Soon from my blood shall thousand warriors rise,
Avengers of thy country and thy sire;
And, like their evil demon, still will I
In my seed haunt them, torture, scalp, and slay,
Till not a White Man's foot profane this land,
Till race and name be found on earth no more,
Till sire and squaw be cold, nor babe remain
To give his silken tresses to the knife.
Nid. But not if they take aim while we are raving.
Hark! hark!—a White Man's step!
Ker. It was the grass
That murmur'd, or the wave.
Nid. There is no wind.
Ker. It was the sigh of slumbering bear, or wing
Of unseen whipperwill.
Nid. Away! away!
[*A shot is fired.—Exit* NIDANISS, *followed by* KERHONAH.—*Enter* WARD *and Soldiers, in pursuit.*]

SCENE III.—*Another part of the Wilderness.*—*Enter* DIXWELL, *disguised as an Indian.*

Dix. How savagely those pallid fiends pursue
Their dusky brother for his life and land!
But, oh! what tenfold peril hangs o'er him
Whom e'en this Indian garb endangers not!
To me this garb of danger is protection;
For I am chased and hunted, as men chase
Wolves; and a price is set upon my blood.
Yes, Cromwell's death and Monk's success are known.
What awful fate awaits me? I will seek
The end I fear. Be this my journey's close!
The rapid wave rolls black in depth below.
Would all were o'er! Ne'er shall I be at peace
Till in the grave—ah! shall I find it there?
Hark! footsteps? my pursuers? Let them come,
And death be found unsought. But who are these?
[*Enter* NIDANISS, *pursued by* WARD.]
Ward. (*Seizing* NIDANISS.) Stop! pretty squaw!
What haste?
Dix. (*Seizing* WARD.) Hold!
Ward. What art thou?
Dix. A villain.
Ward. I respect the family.
Dix. Hence! while thou may'st.

Ward. Gladly. Good day to you, Blackbeard.
[*Exit* WARD.]
Dix. Tremble not, maiden. Fear not me.
Nid. Stern White Man,
Kill me not!
Dix. Rather would I slay myself.
Nid. Stern White Man, pierce not through this breast my sire's,
And I will be thy slave; my hands shall dress
Thy game, thy maize, and spread thy bed of leaves;
And I will watch thy couch, to scare away
The serpent and the wolf. Oh, I will *love* thee,
If thou wilt spare my father in his child!
Dix. To rescue thee and smite thy father's foes,
Me the Great Spirit over seas hath sent
On wings of winds.
Nid. How! hath the White Man's God
Sent thee, a White Man, to destroy the Whites?
Dix. They have offended him in wronging you;
And therefore hath he sent me.
Nid. Thou say'st well.
Dix. Now lead me to thy father.
Nid. Where is thine?
But mine is old like him. Hast thou a daughter?
Dix. I have a daughter.
Nid. And thou lov'st her well.
But would she bring thy foe to slay thee sleeping?
I love my father. Think not that his child
Will bring the serpent to her father's couch.
Love the White daughters so? Smite here and kill!
But he is safe.
Dix. He is, my child, he is.
Suspect me not. Soon shalt thou know me better,
My dear adopted daughter. Hark! who comes?
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*The rocky banks of a river.—Enter* KERHONAH, *wounded.*

Ker. What is this dreaminess—this shuddering?
Ha! is it death?—My child! my child!—who comes?
I care not who. Are ye, too, vanquish'd, spirits?
Ye guardian angels of Red Men, where are ye?
Assist me, spirits, if ye hover near;
And if, indeed, ye *have* not left our side,
And joined the strongest! Terrible Yehoway!
Thus shall Kerhonah die! and unavenged?
Lo, Ancient One! that lived'st ere canoe
Clave the blue waters; ere the white fiends came,
Sons of the ocean's shark, on wings of tempests;
Lo! these gray locks have grown in battle gray—
Not that my soul hath lusted after blood:
No; I lov'd peace; thou know'st how well I lov'd it;
How fervently I sought it! But these *Whites!*
Have they not yearn'd to root us from the land?
Theirs are our homes, our fields, our arms, our lives;
Wilt thou give all things to these pallid shadows?
Theirs are our homes, our fields, our arms, our lives,
But not our freedom, *if the dead are free!*
Then let us die like men—like men, Yehoway!
The Maspataquas are no more a people.
No blood of mine shall henceforth circulate
In warrior veins. But thus unmann'd to die—
Thus—starting at the flower-bird's wing, or fly
That hums my death-song—even as the Whites
Close, in affrighted prayer, their womanish eyes.
O let me not die thus! not thus! but hot
In battle, compass'd round with crimson wolves,
Making the White Men's wives bring forth dead children—
Full satisfied with blood, and calling up
With shouts our fathers from their graves, to shout
Kerhonah!—'Twill not be. Fast ebbs my life.
Where is my child, my child? Oh, does she live?
If yet she lives, God of my sires, look forth!
So, dying, shall I know that yet she lives.
Bare thy bright arm, and fling this gloom aside!
Smile on thy clouds, and fringe their skirts with beauty!
And let the beams, which spirits fair delight
To wreathe their hair with, 'mid thy forests green
Illume the trembling leaf-drop, ere it falls—
To indicate their presence, and to warm
My poor, old, dying heart.
[*He faints.—Enter* DIXWELL *and* NIDANISS.]
Dix. But I heard voices.
Stop! who is here?
Nid. My father!—Not a word
To poor Nidaniss? Dead? dead? *Thou* hast slain him?
Now, White fiend, kill me too, and I will thank thee
With dying curses. Strike! that I may join
The warrior spirit on his fiery clouds,
And pour, with him, on your detested homes,
The lightning of the storm! Wilt thou not strike,
Pale demon?
Dix. No, thy sire shall live.
[*He bathes* KERHONAH'S *lips with a cordial.*]
Behold! he moves!
Soon will he speak. Tell him, my child,
What thy white sire hath done for him and thee.
[*He stands apart, while* NIDANISS *binds* KERHONAH'S *wounds, and applies the cordial again to his lips.*]
Nid. Drink, sire, the White Man's drink. Water of fire,
Be strong to save!
Ker. Art thou my daughter's spirit?
Nid. Speak! O speak!
Ker. But canst thou touch me? can I feel thee, thus?
Thus can I kiss thee? Spirit, loveliest one,
Comest thou to gird thy father's sinking heart
With hope that shall not mock me? I have heard,
And I believe—for so our priests have taught—
That spirits know the destinies of men:
Tell me what doom awaits me. Bonds and torture?
Death?—or triumphant vengeance? Be not mute!
Speak the worst boldly, evil though it be!
Kerhonah never can know coward fear,
Or do a deed unworthy of his nation.
Nid. The worst is thus to see thee, stretch'd on earth,
Wounded and bleeding. Am not I thy child,
Thy living child, Nidaniss?
Ker. Child! my child!——
No tears!—Let us avenge the dead, and die
Together.
Nid. Dost thou talk of death, when such
Strange aid is sent us?
Ker. Aid! alas! what aid?
Dost thou, too, rave?
Nid. The stranger, like a spirit,
Rush'd on the ruffian who had captured me,
And, "Fear not me," he said; "for o'er the waters
The White Man's God hath sent me, to destroy
Thy father's foes."
Ker. A cunning treacherous snare,
Well laid for our destruction.
Nid. Treachery?
But thou, my father, hast not seen his brow,
Where truth is throned. Sublime in age he stalks,
As when on earth a warrior's spirit moves
With loftier stride; and such he seemed to me,

Even as the White priest, Elliot, will appear,
When on his cheek the evening of his days
Shall fade into a milder majesty.
Ker. Let that detested name profane no more
My daughter's lips! For him didst thou disdain
Our bravest youth! Alas, I blamed thee not!
Therefore my people are no more a nation;
And terrible Yehoway, in my age,
Bids my sad steps forget the paths of fame.
What snake is this? My hatchet!
Nid. 'Tis himself.
Fear not, White Man! my father will not hurt thee.
Ker. *(Aside.)* I hate him, though he saved my child, because
He saved her. How with lowly cringe and fawn
He comes!—Curs'd be his race! Shall a vile White
Make me his debtor? Wherefore is he white?
Com'st thou to slay the dying?
Dix. To avenge
Thy wrongs I come, Kerhonah! to destroy
Thy foes who hunt ye o'er your fathers' graves.
Ker. And where, Avenger! is *thy* father's grave!
Where sleeps *thy* mother's dust?
Dix. Beyond the waters.
Ker. Why dost thou quit the land that holds their bones?
Dix. I fought against my king, who fell and died;
But when, at length, his son, in manhood's strength,
Climb'd, armed and terrible, his father's throne,
I fled from vengeance; and o'er ocean broad,
Came, on the tempest's wing, to fight thy battles.
Ker. False to thy chief, canst thou be true to me?
Dix. Try me.
Ker. When we believe a foe we trust him.
Dix. But was I false to him or he to all?
Better a tyrant perish than our country.
Ker. How can another's fault exculpate thine?
A vile race are ye; senseless too as vile,
Ye cheat yourselves with your hypocrisy.
Boasting thy crimes, talk'st thou of truth to me?
Hence, snake of words! thy wiles cannot deceive me;
I was stung yesterday.
Nid. If he mean ill,
Weak as thou art, my father! what prevents him
From acting his intention?
Ker. Know'st thou not,
That when the monarch of the forest falls,
His boughs bring down to earth the trees around him?
And would'st thou follow me? Have then thy will.
And stand thou powerless in my power, as now
I, powerless, stand in thine. Safe shalt thou be
As the winged cloud, that laughs all bonds to scorn.
But I will trust thee, stranger! when I know thee.
Dix. I will not quit thee, thus exposed and wounded;
For thou hast raised my soul from deep despair.
But now I call'd on death, and sought in death
That peace which Heaven denies not to the worms!
And horror was to me what beauty was
And is to happier beings. I am changed:
I have a motive now to cherish life.
The past is hopeless gloom! Oh, but the future—
My deeds that *shall* be!—they, though late, may yet
Snatch my redemption from relenting fate,
And win a smile severe from seraph lips.
Perchance a sufferer's tear, where all is spotless,
Shed o'er the record of my many crimes,
May wash them out. No, never, never, never!
Ne'er may that injur'd one in Heaven forgive
Deeds black as mine. But I, alas, am raving!
Pardon me, kingly savage, if I crave
Thy own indulgence to thyself. Let food
And rest, though brief, re-string thy languid frame;
Then let us travel on the wings of darkness.
Thy foes are watchful, and I too will watch.
Nay, dost thou fear to take thy tranquil rest?
Suspicious Sachem! I am all thy own,
And to thy weal I consecrate my blood.
Hail and receive me, land of forests! Wave
Thy darkest tresses o'er my destined tomb!
Thou hast no desert wilder than my deeds,
Or gloomier than my thoughts; and hearts like mine
May love the valleys that seem made for sadness—
The sunless perpetuity of shade,
O'er which the midnight of the hemlock frowns.
Hail, and receive me, wilderness, whose forests
Toss o'er dark spirits, like a maniac's hair!
Give me two yards of earth—and take my bones!

SCENE V.—*The banks of the Connecticut.—In the backyround, a Blockhouse or Fortress.—Enter* WARD *and* GOFFE.

Ward. I cannot but remember that I might
Have been most happy but for this said Dixwell.
Goffe. Was he the friend and too successful rival
Who robb'd thee of the wife that was not thine?
Ward. He was. I lov'd her, though she was another's.
He knew I lov'd her, yet he woo'd and won her.
I hate him, both for his success and falsehood,
And strongly hope to pay him well for both.
Goffe. Still dost thou love that false one's memory?
Ward. Cold thing of common clay! thou nothing know'st
Of fervent passion's power. It is eternal.
Ask if the sea is salt, if ice is chill,
But ask not if I love her memory,
While, for her sake, I love this wilderness,
Because it holds her bones. But why stand here,
Awaiting sage instructions from you wittol,
And wasting the dear moments due to vengeance?
Goffe, in the eye of my revenge, my foe
Seems tried and sentenced, bound and led to death.
O may he die a coward, and I see it!

SCENE VI.—*The platform of a rude Fortress, near the Connecticut.*—MORTON *alone.*—*Enter* WARD.

Mor. How now? what news?
Ward. Thy gallant foe hath left
The cave, and join'd Kerhonah. As he fled,
He dropped this pistol.
Mor. Why, 'tis one of mine!
How came he by it?—O Ward, haste and arm
Our people. Let us instantly pursue
The traitor, ere he teach the foe to beat us.
[*Exit* WARD.—*Enter* MARY.
Mary. Dear Morton, dost thou shun me? Thou art not offended?
Mor. No, my love.
Mary. Then thou art ill.
Thy cheek is paler, and thine eyes are blood-shot.
Nay, something troubles thee. What is it? Tell me.
Mor. Yes, something troubles me. But spare me now
Thy questions; for I cannot answer them.
Mary. But I will know what troubles thee. Alas!
Why dost thou mutter to the vacant air
Words of unquiet? Roll'd into thyself,
Why dost thou stand attent and blank, like one
Who deems a snake is hidden in his garments;
And, pale as snow, with horrid expectation,
Seeks what he fears to find?

Mor. Thou shalt know all.
But spare me now, for I have work to do.
Kerhonah in the neighbouring woods is prowling,
Joined by a traitor, coloured like ourselves;
Ay, and in correspondence, it is said,
With some one here who ought not to betray us.
Know'st thou this pistol?
Mary. Is it one of thine?
Mor. Pistols are all like pistols.
Mary. It is thine.
Mor. O woman!—Pray thee, leave me.
Mary. But not long.
Thou soon wilt come to me. When wilt thou come?
Mor. By-and-by. Pray thee, go.
Mary. But then come soon. [*Exit* MARY.]

SCENE VII.—*Outside of the Fortress.*—WARD GOFFE, *and Soldiers. pass over the stage, followed by* MORTON, *and* MARY *in the disguise of a hunter.*

Mor. So, my old friend, Miles Winthorp of Rehoboth,
Hath sent his son to aid us in the chase?
'Tis well, and well timed too. But hath he never
A taller son than thou, my little hero?
Mary. My brethren perish'd in the Pequod war.
Mor. Well, thou shalt be my page. I like thy voice.
It tells one of old times; so beautiful,
That all the coming years seem dark and stained.
'Tis like the throstle's in the trysting tree;
'Tis like the whipperwill's above the bower
Where love meets love, and talks the dim stars bright;
'Tis soothing as the music of a song,
Sung to us by the lady of our love,
In the undoubting days of happy courtship.

SCENE VIII.—*The Camp of the Mohawks.*—WABANG, ACHONDA, OKIMA, TORONTO, ELLIOT, *and Warriors, seated.*

Ach. (*To* TOR.) Stranger, we marked thy coming; we admired
Thy fearless step. With calm, unquivering lip
And eye of cool composure, thou hast rested
Thy travell'd weariness, amid the warriors
Famed for unequalled deeds of blood and valour—
The Mohawks. Wretched is the mother's son
Whose foes they are. Now hast thou had thy fill
Of food and rest. Who art thou? Speak thine errand.
And may thy mother's son prove wise and bold.
Tor. (*Rises.*) Brave Mohawks! tell not me that you are brave;
I know it well. Ah! would that White Men only
Had cause to wish you dastardly and base!
Ok. Warrior, well said.
Wab. Thy words are good.
Ok. Proceed.
Tor. Amid the children of one family
There should be peace. Are not all Red Men brethren?
Are not the Whites victorious? Think not ye,
That when the Maspataquas are no more,
The Mohawks will be safe. O'er rock and wave
The fire-arm'd foe will hunt ye till ye fall:—
Be warn'd! and in our ruin see your own.
War. Thy speech is wise.
Tor. Scalp-tearing Sagamores!
What if in me, a suppliant here, ye saw
Your enemy, that brave and wrong'd Kerhonah,
On whose broad breast the battle scars are close,
As on the danger-warning rattlesnake
His dusky spots? How would you greet him, warriors?
Wab. As brethren their sick brother.
Tor. Lo! my sire
Hath sent his eldest son to smoke with you
The pipe of amity.
[*He presents the Calumet to* WABANG, *who smokes, and passes it to the other Warriors.*]
Lo! here stand I,
Toronto! and Kerhonah is my sire.
Ach. Thy mother's son talks well.
Wab. Proceed, proceed.
Tor. In battle with the Whites our warriors died:
Few are the Maspataquas who survive:
Will you join hands with us in our distress?
Wab. Lo! am not I the fear'd-afar Wabang?
Who twangs a deadlier arrow to the mark?
What wealthy chief can boast an ampler store?
Who treads the wild with surer foot than I?
Is not Niponket mine, with all its people?
Is not Pexata mine, with all its people?
Orono's maize? and Cohos black with thunder?
And green Pivonet, neighbour of the morning?
And wild Recassum, with its caverned rocks,
Glades of the moose, and waters of the swan,
And swamps for ambush?
War. Sachem, thou say'st well.
Wab. Will you have brandy?
War. Brandy, the strong water!
Wab. Will you have linen? will you have red cloth?
Will you have iron scalp-knives?
War. Thou say'st well.
Wab. Will you dig up the hatchet?—with the scalps
Of White Men deck your dwellings?—and bring home
Their captured wives?
War. Cloth! brandy! and their wives!
Ell. (*Rises.*) Oft have ye heard me, warriors—hear me now:
Dig not the hatchet up without good cause.
Tor. Of course thou dost not wish to perish by it.
Ell. The mighty Spirit, whom I serve and love,
And whom I preach, loves peace. His written word
Which I have talk'd to you——
Tor. Is false, as thou art. [*He rises.*]
Peace, do ye love? Peace!—Peace? It is a lie.
White liar!—Oh, my soul detests thee, liar!
Did we not love you, liar?—We dwelt with you
In peace: we call'd you brethren—such ye seemed—
O liar!—thou hast filled my heart with flame!
And, would to wroth Yehoway, that my hand
Might lay thee hush'd this moment at my feet!—
We lov'd you, murderous Whites! till all would say,
Where'er we came, "Behold the White Man's friends."
We gave you all, but all would not suffice.
Bloodhounds, ye hunted, and your prey was man—
A nobler race than yours, and therefore wrong'd!
With envious fang, ye worry whom ye hate.
Listen not, Mohawks, to that talking serpent!—
Still wilt thou prate?—Behold in him the cause
Of our defeats! behold the secret-learner!
The husband of your wives!—Yet, talker? Down!
Or my good hatchet—there, where thou wilt lie
Mute, without bidding—shall this moment lay thee.
[*Enter* NIDANISS.]
Nid. (*Embracing* TOR.) My brother! O Toronto!
War. (*Clapping their hands.*) Maid, well done!
Tor. (*Sternly repulsing her.*) Begone from me!
Seest thou thy White love there?

That trembling talker, with the lip of chalk,
Now pleading against thee, and for thy foes?
Go! or my knife this instant weds you here;—
Go! [*Enter, dressed as an Indian,* DIXWELL, *who steps between them.*]

Dix. Harm her not, boy! Indian blood is scarce.
Tor. Another White!
Nid. Hold! wilt thou kill our friends!
Tor. Another white friend! have we, then, no foes?
Dix. I am thy friend, the friend of all Red Men.
Stand not between us, Sagamores. The brave,
Come where they may, speed ever best. Come, brother,
I will embrace thee first, and then shake hands.
[*He wrestles with* TORONTO, *overthrows, and disarms him.*]
War. White Indian! brave White Indian! thou dost well.
Dix. (*To* TOR.) Now be we friends:—
White am I? Thirty summers o'er my head
Have roll'd their suns, since war first smutch'd me brown.
Ye wonder, Sagamores, at my intrusion:—
I but precede the father of this youth,
My friend, Kerhonah. He, by many a wound
Weaken'd, moves slowly; but, behold, he comes!
[*Enter* KERHONAH.]
Wab. King of the Maspataquas, blood-baptiz'd Kerhonah, welcome!
Ach. In good time, to smoke
The pipe of peace, brought by thy valiant son.
Ker. Your words are life!
They visit my sick heart
Like a new being. Frown not, Sagamores,
On this degraded cheek, these locks of snow!
What though 'tis true Kerhonah's hair is white?
I would in nought resemble our pale foes;
And 'twas not age that bleach'd these locks of darkness.
'Tis true I weep—but these are *burning* tears:
I weep, because your brethren died in vain,
And wolves are surfeited with Indian blood.
But if the guns were roaring o'er the rivers,
If drums were growling, if the jagged bullet
Were hissing through the desert's pillar'd shade,
If the strong hichory bow were twanging round us,
My soul would scorn even this, this *fiery* tear.
If o'er barb'd arrow, and the whizzing jav'lin,
And the dear hatchet, busy with the dying,
The death-and-war-whoop drown'd the rifle's song—
How would Kerhonah's *tearless soul* rejoice!
Would I *then* weep? Th' awaken'd dead should hear
My battle yell; and, shouting, see me dance
In White Men's blood, beneath their sulphury noon-night,
Laughing my song of vengeance.
Will you grant
The joy of battle to a fugitive,
Who yearns to perish on his slaughter'd foes?
Be still magnanimous! the brave are always so.
War. Brandy! red-cloth! their wives!
Wab. War with the Whites!
War. War! war! Down with the White priest!
To the stone drag him!
[*They drag* ELLIOT *to the stone of sacrifice.*]
Nid. Great Spirit, save thy priest;—O save him!
[*She clasps* ELLIOT *in her arms, and lays her head upon his.*]
Ach. Smite not the priest, lest ye offend his God.
Wab. Warriors, forbear.
Ker. Toronto, hold thine hand.
Ach. Why did the Pequods fail in war? Because
They left the spirits whom their fathers worshipped,
And scorn'd the priests who served them.
Ker. Priest, 'tis true.
Ach. Okima, quit thine hold.
Ker. Nidaniss, rise.
[ELLIOT *is lifted from the stone.*]
Ach. Know, Elliot, that the Mohawks will not serve
Your stranger God. We love our fathers' gods,
Who shower the pleasant rain upon our corn,
And guarantee our fearless liberty.
Wab. We covet not subjection and your prayers.
Go, therefore, to thy friends, and safely go.
Nor Mohawk shall lay hostile hand on thee,
Nor Maspataquan. Tell thy countrymen,
Thus say the Mohawks—"Quit the Red Man's land,
And, o'er the waters, seek your fathers' graves."

SCENE IX.—*Near the Mohawks' camp.—A hut in the background.—Enter* NIDANISS *and* ELLIOT.

Nid. Why stay'st thou here? O be not thou found here!
Fly, or Toronto will destroy thee, Elliot!
Ell. I linger but to warn you and advise.
Quit not the precincts of the Mohawks' camp;
For surely ye will here be sought, and here
Destroy'd, if ye contemn my prudent counsel.
I go to plead your cause, and preach for peace,
And bid my brethren pray to the Great Spirit
That the red hatchet may be buried deep,
Never to rise again.
Nid. My brother still!
Go, tell them that we gave them lands and corn,
When o'er the blue broad deep they came, and sought
A home, whose floor they wash with Indian blood.
Ell. One last embrace!—one dear word for remembrance.
Nid. Nay, touch me not! Am I not stained already?
Polluted, lost?—my country's ruiner?
I brought destruction on the Maspataquas;
My guilty love for thee hath ruined us.
Where are the dwellings of my fathers? Where
The sky-broad trees that screened my mother's hut?
Where is the mother of the last of nine?
Why doth that latest born lament the mother,
Who from her bosom fed the curse of all?—
I lov'd thee, Elliot, and my love destroy'd us.
We eat the bread of strangers—bitter bread!
The earth we tread resounds the feet of strangers!
We press the stranger's couch—'tis hard and sleepless!
We hear the stranger's speech—it grates the soul,
Like thankless deeds!—The looks that look on us
Are strangers' looks, that talk to us of death
And buried friends! We have no garden ground,
No maize have we, our fire is borrow'd fire!
We have no home—no kettle of our own!
I lov'd thee, Elliot, and my love was fatal.
The everlasting gods that so decreed,
Will also that all curses shall be mine.
The serpent shakes his ringed tail at me;
O'er me, me only, screams the voice of midnight—
I hear it when the happy are asleep;
Darkness looks on me with strange eyes of fire—
Blue, red, and flamy green, and weeps dropp'd fire;
The bear growls at me as I pass his home;
And when I start from dreams of thee, Yehoway
Derides me with his dreadful burning laugh,

That laughs from end to end of blazing heav'n;
Then, from his clouds, pours down on me, in thunder,
The torrent of his scorn and fury!—Go!
When far away, yet, yet thou wilt be here!
Oh, what a burden!—what a blessing!—Go!
And, if we never more shall meet beneath
Our father's tree, and in our fatherland,
Yet shall I meet thee in that better land
Of which thou speak'st; there! where the Greatest Spirit
Cools the hot lightning from my mother's eyes,
And turns her rage to meekness;—while he speaks
Of thee, and thy true words, and deeds as true,
And bids her love thy brethren for thy sake.

[*Exit* ELLIOT.]

SCENE X.—*Near the Falls of the Cohos.*—MORTON *sleeping.*—MARY, *in male attire, at a short distance from him.*

Mary. Stung by imagined wrongs, and mad for vengeance,
E'en in his dreams, he hunts my father's life.
And yet I hesitate to tell him all!
Why should he hate me for my parent's fault?
But I will save that parent from his rage;
And, like his guardian angel, waft aside
The fire-wing'd bullet, mission'd for destruction.

[*Cries without of* ELLIOT! ELLIOT! *Then enter* WARD, GOFFE, *Soldiers, and* ELLIOT.]

Mor. (*Rising.*) How now? what news?
Night-wandering pale apostle, whence comest thou?
Ell. Straight from the Mohawks' camp.
Mor. Whom sawest thou there?
What recent visiters hath King Wabang?
Ell. Kerhonah, and an Englishman, called Dixwell.
Mor. Thanks for that information. Both shall die—
The bloody Indian and the traitorous Briton.
Ell. If Dixwell is a traitor, let him die.
But for Kerhonah——
Mor. True, he hath a daughter——
Ell. Yes, and a son; and, therefore, must he die?
Of all the Maspataquas three survive—
Kerhonah, and his daughter, and his son.
The nation, utterly o'erthrown, is now
Only a name. O, then, be merciful
To thy great enemy, in his day of trouble,
Or hope not thou for mercy! Do not thirst
For vengeance, in the hour of triumph, lest
Wrath drink thee up in his. Did not the father
Of chas'd Kerhonah welcome to this land
The Pilgrim Fathers? Did he not as brethren
Love them? or as a father loves his children?—
He did. And how did we repay his kindness?
Let manless Maspataqua answer me.
Mor. Will the hot Mohawks fight for chas'd Kerhonah?
Have they resolved to dig the hatchet up?
Ell. Hotly they talk. But if thou seek for peace,
And seek it in a meek and Christian spirit,
They will not fight. If thou provoke the war,
And blow the fire that must be quenched in blood,
Be on thy soul the guilt and punishment.

SCENE XI.—*The Cohos Falls.*—NIDANISS *kneeling,* KERHONAH *standing beside her.*—DIXWELL *watching near.*

Nid. Terrible Spirit!
Cohos, black with thunder!
Stern gatherer of the clouds that have no home!
Long ere the Red Man chas'd the moose, or quenched
The hatchet's thirst, or scooped the sailing tree,
Thou, with thine indefatigable roar,
Didst awe the desert, manless, dark, and cold.
Ere flower, or leaf, or tiniest moss adorned
The valleys—when there was no living thing,
Not e'en the little fly, with wings of sunbeams—
Thou spakest to the rocky ribs of earth,
Beneath the moonless night. And when the White Men
And we, thy favourites, shall cease to live,
Thine anger still will foam, thy tears will flow:
All other sounds may slumber, hush'd in death,
But still thy accents will be long and loud.
Ker. God of the Mohawks! everlasting Voice!
Behold, in me, the son of Maspatake,
The king of kings. When o'er the waters first
The White Men came, he bade the strangers welcome,
And gave them food and lands, and smoked with them
The pipe of peace. Behold their gratitude!
The son of Maspatake, a fugitive,
Driv'n from his father's graves, hath now no home,
No people, and no hope! except in thee,
God of the Mohawks! hear me and avenge!
Nid. I cast my mother's hair into thy flood,
And this black blood-stiff lock of slain Maskate:—
God of the Mohawks! hear us and avenge!
Ker. When with thy children we go forth to battle,
God of the Mohawks! fill our hearts with fire,
And make our right hands, as thy might, resistless,
And dreadful as the lightnings that gleam o'er thee!

[*A shot is fired from without, and* KERHONAH *falls.*]

Ker. Quit not, thou ruddy tide, my harrow'd cheek,
Lest White Men mock its paleness. Why should death
Whiten the lip which fear could never change?
Weep not, my daughter! lest these tongues of serpents
Say that thy tears, which bathe my breast, are mine.

[*Another shot is fired from without, and* DIXWELL *falls. Enter* WARD *and* MORTON, *followed by* MARY, *in male attire, but with her long hair flowing in disorder over her dress.*]

Mary. Oh! who did this?
Mor. I, woman, I!—My wife?
Mary. (*Stooping over* DIXWELL.) O my poor father!
Ker. Ha! ha! ha! Hallo!
These White Men kill their fathers! Ha! ha! ha!

[*He dies, shouting and laughing convulsively.—Enter* ELLIOT.]

Nid. (*To* ELLIOT.) Thou art one of them! White worm!

[*She rushes upon him, bears him to the ground, and seizes him by the throat, but suddenly rises.*]

No! live!
My father! hear'st thou? Shall no drop
Of thy blood flow in any living thing?
Toronto will not deign to live a suppliant,
Will not outlive his nation; but, my sire,
Thy blood is precious, and shall not die all.
White teacher! I was mad with burning rage,
Because the bullets went into my father,
And made holes through him.
Shall his blood die all?
Wills the Great Spirit, that our blood die all?
Help me to dig his grave;—then mourn with me,

Till the white rain descend, and cold bright stone
Floor the deep waters. Then will I become
The mother of thy sons, and from my breast
Feed children that shall look like him and *thee*,
Thou dear, thou fatal one! What! wilt thou not?

[*Enter* TORONTO, *followed by* WABANG, OKIMA, ACHONDA, *and Mohawk Warriors, gradually filling the Stage.*]

Tor. Snake! venom pang your blood to rottenness,
Traitor, and traitress! Ye shall die in tortures.
The flames shall try thy manhood, and reward
Her treason to her country and her kind.

[*He beats* ELLIOT *and* NIDANISS *off the stage with his bow; then, turning, strikes* MORTON *down with a blow of his hatchet.*]

Mor. Yes, Elliot, I sowed vengeance, and reap death.
The flames I blindly fann'd, my blood must quench.
O prophet! wherefore did'st thou vainly warn me?

[*He dies.*]

THE RANTER.

To JOHN BOWRING, Esq., one of our steadiest Champions of Liberty, Civil and Religious—whose Translations have enabled us to shake hands with Brethren whom we knew not; the Living, who to us were dead; and the Dead, who cannot die—this Poem is dedicated, by his obliged and thankful Friend, the Author.

PREFACE.

Two generous critics (one of them writing in the *New Monthly Magazine*, and the other in the *Athenæum*) have praised so highly this little, unpuffed, unadvertised book,* that I am almost compelled to doubt whether I still live in England. What! in the land of castes and cant, take a poor self-educated man by the hand, and declare to the world that *his* book is worth reading! To the select writers and readers of the *Squire's Review* such conduct must be utterly incomprehensible, and ought to make Gifford, in his coffin, shake the worms from the brow of a dead slave. One of my warm-hearted critics, he of the *Athenæum*, in his kindness and zeal for my welfare, (which cannot but be sincere, and for which I will never cease to be grateful,) advises me to rhyme no more politics. Poetry, he thinks, is thrown away on such subjects. I think differently, and I will tell him why. But I must first inform him, that I have long ago published poems which contained no political allusions, and that the worst of them all might justly claim a hundred times the merit of these "Corn-Law Rhymes." Yet no man cried, "God bless *them!*" Of the Reviews, the *Eclectic* and *Blackwood* alone condescended to criticise any of them. *The Westminster*, indeed, noticed the "Village Patriarch" with high praise; but the "Village Patriarch" is a *political* poem! Must I then conclude, that I owe the notice which has been taken of the "Corn-Law Rhymes," to the supposition that they are the work of a mechanic? But why should we wonder, if mechanics write well in these days? A journeyman printer, one Benjamin Franklin, wrote good prose before I was born; capital verses and first-rate prose, were written by a tow hackler, called Burns, who has been half a century in his grave; and did not a wool-comber, Shakspeare by name, hundreds of years ago, write better than anybody else, rich or poor, learned or unlearned, before or since? There are many mechanics in Sheffield, who can write better than the author of the "Corn-Law Rhymes."

I will now tell my friend of the *Athenæum* why I think there is nothing unnatural or improper in the union of poetry and politics. Because I think, that any subject whatever in which man takes interest, however humble and commonplace it may be, is capable of inspiring high and true poetry. The power which produced "Tam o' Shanter," is the same power which enabled Gray to write his Elegy. Both are alike masterpieces, though the subjects are utterly unlike each other. But, perhaps, I cannot express myself better on this subject than by quoting a few sentences from two letters, written by me more than two years ago, to two of our greatest critics.*

"I send you with this letter, a copy of the 'Village Patriarch,' a poem; and I think I hear you exclaim, after turning over a page or two, 'What have we here? A *poem* on political economy!' Why not, sir? The utilitarians say, that poets are generally servile fools, and that poetry, when it is not nonsense, is almost sure to be something worse; while the more elegant critics complain that the union of poetry with politics is always hurtful to the politics and fatal to the poetry. But the utilitarians can hardly be right, and the gentlemen critics must be wrong, if Homer, Dante, Milton, Cowper, and Burns were poets. Why should the sensitive bard take less interest than other men in those things which most nearly concern mankind? The contrary ought to be, and is, true. All genuine poets are fervid politicians. Perhaps we owe the inimitable 'Rape of the Lock' to the physical weakness of the author, and his consequent determination to excel in sofa-and-lap-dog poetry; yet was not *he*, was not Pope himself a politician? Ay, and a great one. What *is* poetry but impassioned truth—philosophy in its *essence*—the *spirit* of that 'bright consummate flower,' whose root is in our bosoms? Are there no politics in 'Hamlet?' Is not 'Macbeth'—is not the drama of 'Wallenstein,' a sublime political treatise? Napoleon was a great poet, when, pointing to the pyramids, he said to his army, 'Forty centuries look down upon us!' Perhaps the finest poem in the world is the declaration of Newton relative to his discoveries, 'That he was only like a child gathering pebbles on the shore, while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before him.' The sagacious Bacon and the pious Taylor were both poets of a high order; and I will engage to quote as fine illustrative poetry as ever was written, from the prose of Jeremy Bentham. I blush for the age, through my very bones, while these truisms are wrung from me. An apology to a *king* for the union of poetry and politics, is, at best, like begging pardon of his Queen for the fragrance of a lily; or rather, it is like asking a lady of her train to tolerate the *useful beauty* of 'the corny reed, embattled in its field.' All true and lasting poetry is rooted in the business of life; that of Burns, for instance, would have lost half its value, and have been forgotten, or, perhaps, never heard of, had it not reflected the colours of the wonderful age that was passing over him. How else happens it, that the proudest peer finds himself

* The Ranter. &c.

* Brougham and Bowring.

unable to despise Willie's vulgar 'peck o' malt?' —that the vilest boroughmonger is compelled to join in the poet's hearty welcome of 'Dumourier to his Despots?' and that—in a country where poverty and truth alone are criminal—the lips of fine gentlemen are familiar with the name of a gauger? Where will our children look for the *living* character of the year 1793? Will Burke, the turncoat, inform them 'that titles are but the *guinea's stamp*?' Or will they learn from the writings of Burns, and *from his life*, that, during a certain crusade for ignominy, it was necessary, yet perilous, and in his case fatal, to say, 'the man's the goud for a' that.' My poem* may be a weed, but it has sprung, unforced, out of existing things. It may not suit the circulating libraries for adult babies; but it is the earnest product of experience, a retrospect of the past, and an evidence of the present, a sign of the times, a symptom, terrible, or otherwise, which our state doctors will do well to observe with the profoundest shake of the head; for it affords a prognostic, if not a proof, that Smith and M'Culloch must soon be as familiar as Dilworth to schoolboys. And is it of no importance what a man of the middle class—hardly raised above the lowest—thinks, when the lowest are beginning to think? To Sir Thomas Bread-Tax Pauper, Lady Betty Pension, and all the great and small vulgar, my opinions may be the *ne plus ultra* of impropriety; but, believing, as I do, that the Corn-Laws have a direct and rapid tendency to ruin my ten children and their country, with all its venerable and venerated institutions, where is the wonder if I hate the perpetrators of such insane atrocities? Their ancestors, I believe, were good men. The Savilles and the Rockinghams, were not palaced almoners, nor are their successors like the Shelleys and the Lauderdales. But when suicidal anti-profit laws speak to my heart from my children's trenchers—when statutes for restricting the industry of a population, which is only superabundant because it is oppressed, threaten to send me to the treadmill, for the crime of inflicted want—when, in a word, my feelings are *hammered* till they are 'cold-short' —habit can no longer bend them to courtesy; they snap—and fly off in sarcasm. Is it strange that my language is fervent as a welding heat, when my thoughts are *passions*, that rush burning from my mind, like the white-hot bolts of steel? You do not seem to be sufficiently aware of the importance of *these low matters of trade;* you do not seem to suspect, that, if the Corn-Laws continue much longer, the *death-struggle* of competition will terminate *suddenly!* But your friend, Lord Milton, knows that these trifles are serious things. They are not beneath *his* notice. In all places, at all times, on every occasion he has done his duty, and, by a superhuman effort, raised himself above the prejudices of his caste. To him we owe the preservation (not uninjured) of our ancient staple, the woollen manufacture. But for his pithy unanswerable speeches, we should still have had a wool-tax—but no buyers of British woollen! I do not wish that there were less of Chatham, or of Brougham in your speeches; but an infusion of Smith and M'Culloch is wanting, to make them what the speeches of a philosophic statesman in the nineteenth century ought to be."

I cannot conclude without a few remarks on the present state of the trade of Sheffield, as connected with the tendency of the Corn-Laws. The Germans being able to buy the necessaries of life without restriction, are becoming dangerous competitors to us; but, in consequence of the troubles on the Continent, our merchants have lately received many orders which, in other circumstances, would have been executed abroad; and the great and *sudden* demand for our goods has caused a general strike for increased wages. The present glut of orders, then, is an accident; but gluts and scarcities, generally, are the results of absurd legislation; and I might assert, without fear of refutation, that if trade were universally free, neither gluts nor scarcities could, to any great extent, or for any great length of time, exist. *This, then, is the favourable moment for the repeal of the Corn-Laws.* If we wait until the Continent is pacified, and our rivals enter again into active competition with us, the advance which has here taken place in wages will be another premium in their favour. But who does not see that, until the Corn-Laws are repealed, *the great question of wages can never be settled in England*?—that gluts must alternate with scarcities?—gluts of orders with gluts of goods!—that the feast of to-day must be followed by the famine of to-morrow?—insolence by humiliation, humiliation by insolence?—and that, with the intemperance and want of forethought, resulting from the absence of a *steady* demand for goods, the conflicts and heart-burnings of the employers and the employed must continue? But how long will such a state of things yet last? Can we compete for ever with un-bread-taxed rivals? No! capital will go where it will pay; skill will follow capital; and our manufactories will at length stop, simultaneously, and for ever! The immense camp of London will then be *without pay;* the immense camp of Glasgow will be *without pay;* the immense camp of the West-Riding of Yorkshire will be *without pay*, and almost within shout of a still more multitudinous camp—that of Lancashire —also *without pay!* And all this may happen; and, if the Corn-Laws remain much longer on the statute-book, *will* happen, perhaps, in one and the same week, day, or hour! If I am called upon to produce from history a record of similar catastrophes, I shall answer, that history can furnish no record of *a similar state of things.* The British government is the only one that ever legislated *against* the bread of its People, by impeding the exchange of manufactured goods for food, at the very moment when such exchange ought to have been facilitated by all possible or conceivable means.

* The Village Patriarch.

THE RANTER.

I.

Miles Gordon sleeps; his six days' labour done,
He dreams of Sunday, verdant fields, and prayer:
O rise, bless'd morn, unclouded! Let thy sun
Shine on the artisan—thy purest air
Breathe on the bread-tax'd labourer's deep despair!
Poor sons of toil! I grudge them not the breeze
That plays with Sabbath flowers, the clouds that play
With Sabbath winds, the hum of Sabbath bees,
The Sabbath walk, the skylark's Sabbath lay,
The silent sunshine of the Sabbath day.

II.

The stars wax pale, the moon is cold and dim;
Miles Gordon wakes, and gray dawn tints the skies:
The many-childed widow, who to him
Is as a mother, hears her lodger rise,
And listens to his prayer with swimming eyes.
For her and for her orphans poor he prays,
For all who earn the bread they daily eat:—
"Bless them, O God, with useful, happy days,

With hearts that scorn all meanness and deceit;
And round their lowly hearths let freemen meet!"—
This morn, betimes, she hastes to leave her bed,
For he must preach beneath th' autumnal tree:
She lights her fire, and soon the board is spread
With Sabbath coffee, toast, and cups for three.
Pale he descends; again she starts to see
His hollow cheek, and feels they soon must part!
But they shall meet again—that hope is sure;
And, oh! she venerates his mind and heart,
For he is pure, if mortal e'er was pure!
His words, his silence, teach her to endure!
And then he helps to feed her orphan'd five!
O God! thy judgments cruel seem to be!
While bad men biggen long and cursing thrive,
The good, like wintry sunbeams, fade and flee—
That we may follow *them*, and come to thee.

III.

In haste she turns, and climbs the narrow stair,
To wake her eldest born, but, pausing, stands
Bent o'er his bed; for on his forehead bare,
Like jewels ring'd on sleeping beauty's hands,
Tired labour's gems are set in beaded bands;
And none, none, none, like bread-tax'd labour know'th
How more than grateful are his slumbers brief.
Thou dost not know, thou pamper'd son of sloth!
Thou canst not tell, thou bread-tax-eating thief!
How sweet is rest to bread-tax'd toil and grief.
Like sculpture, or like death, serene he lies.
But, no, that tear is not a marble tear!
He names, in sleep, his father's injuries;
And now, in silence, wears a smile severe.
How like his sire he looks, when drawing near
His journey's close, and that fair form bent o'er
His dark'ning cheek, still faintly tinged with red,
And fondly gazed—too soon to gaze no more!—
While her long tresses, o'er the seeming dead,
Stream'd in their black profusion, from the head
Of matron loveliness—more touchingly,
More sadly beautiful, and pale, and still—
A shape of half-divine humanity,
Worthy of Chantrey's steel, or Milton's quill,
Or heaven-taught Raphael's soul-expressing skill!
And must she wake that poor o'er-labour'd youth?
Oh, yes, or Edmund will his mother chide;
For he, this morn, would hear the words of truth
From lips inspired, on Shirecliffe's lofty side,
Gazing o'er tree and tower on Hallam wide.
Up, sluggards, up! the mountains one by one,
Ascend in light; and slow the mists retire
From vale and plain. The cloud on Stannington
Beholds a rocket—No, 'tis Morthen spire!
The sun is risen! cries Stanedge, tipp'd with fire;
On Norwood's flowers the dew-drops shine and shake;
Up, sluggards, up! and drink the morning breeze.
The birds on cloud-left Osgathorpe awake;
And Wincobank is waving all his trees
O'er subject towns, and farms, and villages,
And gleaming streams, and wood, and waterfalls.
Up! climb the oak-crown'd summit! Hoober Stand
And Keppel's Pillar gaze on Wentworth's halls,
And misty lakes, that brighten and expand,
And distant hills, that watch the western strand.
Up! trace God's foot-prints, where they paint the mould
With heavenly green, and hues that blush and glow
Like angel's wings; while skies of blue and gold
Stoop to Miles Gordon on the mountain's brow.
Behold the Great Unpaid! the prophet, lo!
Sublime he stands beneath the Gospel tree,
And Edmund stands on Shirecliffe at his side;
Behind him, sinks, and swells, and spreads a sea
Of hills, and vales, and groves; before him glide
Don, Rivelin, Loxley, wandering in their pride
From heights that mix their azure with the cloud;
Beneath him, spire and dome are glittering;
And round him press his flock, a wo-worn crowd.
To other words, while forest echoes ring,
"Ye banks and braes o' bonny Doon," they sing;
And, far below, the drover, with a start
Awaking, listens to the well-known strain,
Which brings Shihallian's shadow to his heart,
And Scotia's loneliest vales; then sleeps again,
And dreams, on Loxley's banks, of Dunsinane.
The hymn they sing is to their preacher dear;
It breathes of hopes and glories grand and vast,
While on his face they look, with grief and fear;
Full well they know his sands are ebbing fast;
But, hark! he speaks, and feels he speaks his last!—

IV.

"'Wo be unto you, scribes and pharisees,
Who eat the widow's and the orphan's bread,
And make long prayers to hide your villanies,'
Said He who had not where to lay his head;
And wandering forth, while blew the Sabbath breeze,
Pluck'd ears of corn, with humble men, like these.
God blames not him who toils six days in seven,
Where smoke and dust bedim the golden day,
If he delight, beneath the dome of heaven,
To hear the winds, and see the clouds at play,
Or climb His hills, amid their flowers to pray.
Ask ye if I, of Wesley's followers one,
Abjure the house where Wesleyans bend the knee?
I do—because the *spirit* thence is gone;
And truth, and faith, and grace, are not, with me,
The Hundred Popes of England's Jesuitry. [a]
We hate not the religion of bare walls;
We scorn not the *cathedral'd* pomp of prayer;
For sweet are all our Father's festivals,
If contrite hearts the heavenly banquet share
In field or temple: God is everywhere!
But we hate arrogance and selfishness,
Come where they may, and most beneath the roof
Sacred to public worship. We profess
No love for him who feels no self-reproof
When in God's house he stands from God aloof;
Nor worship we grim Mars the homicide:
Our prayers are not for slaughter; we behold
With scorn sectarian and prelatic pride—
Slaves, if not bought, too willing to be sold;
Christians misnamed, whose gods are blood and gold.
What are the *deeds* of men call'd Christian, now?
They roll themselves in dust before the great;
Wherever Mammon builds a shrine, they bow,
And would nail Jesus to their cross of hate,
Should He again appear in *mean* estate.
Pleasant, repaid by splendid beauty's smile,
Praised by the proud, to flatter power and pride,
And prate of independence all the while;
Pleasant and safe, down sunny streams to glide;
But virtue fronts the blast, and breasts the tide.
Where are their 'protests,' monthly, weekly made,
Against Abaddon's Corn-Law, and his sword? [b]
Where their petitions for unfetter'd trade? [c]
Where their recorded execrations pour'd
On blood-stain'd tyrants, and the servile horde?
When earth wept blood, that wolves might lap and swill,
And pleading mercy was a trampled worm,
Basely they pander'd to the slayer's will;
And still their spells they mutter in the storm,
Retarding long the march of slow reform. [d]

When palaced paupers, sneering, beard the town,
They preach the bread-tax in a text like this,
No text more plain—' To Cæsar give his own !'
Ah, Serviles, dev'lishly the mark they miss,
And give to Cæsar *our's*, not their's nor his.
What said the blushing saints, when Britain's name
Brought blushes to all else, o'er every sea,
And Lowe, Reade, Bathurst, names of deathless fame,
Engraved on hers their immortality ?
Oh, we were great, magnanimous, and free,
And pillage-purchased—yet unsold, unbought ;
Bread-tax'd, and Peterloo'd, and parish paid,
And Cadi-Dervised—therefore most devout ;
Unplunder'd, undegraded, unbetray'd,
And Sidmouth'd, Oliver'd, and Castlereagh'd !—
Pious they are, cool, circumspect, severe ;
And while they feel for woes beyond the wave,
They laud the tyrants who starve millions here :
The famish'd Briton *must* be fool or knave,
But wrongs are precious in a foreign slave.
Their Bibles for the heathen load our fleets ;
Lo! gloating eastward, they inquire, ' What news ?'
' We die,' we answer, ' foodless, in the streets,'
And what reply your men of Gospel-views ?
Oh, ' they are sending bacon to the Jews !' (e)
Their lofty souls have telescopic eyes,
Which see the smallest speck of distant pain,
While, at their feet, a world of agonies,
Unseen, unheard, unheeded, writhes in vain.
Yet thou, O God ! withhold'st thy sulphurous rain!
Or, if it fall, it blasts the labour'd vale,
And spares the barren summit ! Lord ! how long !
Shall freedom's struggles turn the good man pale,
And, like a vile apology for wrong,
Add to the torturing scourge another thong ?
O for a Saint, like those who sought and found,
For conscience's sake, sad homes beyond the main !
The Fathers of New England, who unbound,
In wild Columbia, Europe's double chain ;
The men whose dust cries, ' Sparta, live again !'
The slander'd Calvinists of Charles's time
Fought (and they won it) Freedom's holy fight.
Like prophet-bards, although they hated rhyme,
All incorruptible as heaven's own light,
Spoke each devoted preacher for the right.
No servile doctrines, such as power approves,
They to the poor and broken-hearted taught ;
With truths that tyrants dread, and conscience loves,
They wing'd and barb'd the arrows of their thought;
Sin in high places was the mark they sought;
They said not, ' Man be circumspect and thrive !
Be mean, base, slavish, bloody—and prevail !'
Nor doth the Deity they worshipp'd drive
His four-in-hand, applaud a smutty tale,
Send Members to the House, and us to gaol.
With zeal they preach'd, with reverence they were heard ;
For in their daring creed, sublime, sincere,
Danger was found, that parson-hated word !
They flatter'd none—they knew nor hate nor fear,
But taught the will of God—and *did it* here.
Even as the fire-wing'd thunder rends the cloud,
Their spoken lightnings, dazzling all the land,
Abash'd the foreheads of the great and proud,
Still'd faction's roar, as by a god's command,
And meeken'd Cromwell of the iron hand.

V.

" Now look beneath, where tax-bought horses draw
The Cadi *amateur*—a devotee
For drum-head justice famed, and parlour law !
Hater evangelized of liberty !
How worthy Him who died on Calvary,
The Great Reformer, Christ! Who does not loathe
His loathsome loathing of all liberal taint !
Which of you hath not toiled to feed and clothe
His lackeys ? O for Hogarth's hand, to paint
His mental lineaments of beast and saint,
His Corn-Law scowl, and landed length of ears ! (f)
Dost thou, thus early, mighty Lord, repair
To yonder fane ? 'Tis well. Go, and in tears
Kneel, holy wretch, although the Sabbath air,
Is weary of thy long unpunish'd prayer.
Thou, who with hellish zeal, wast drunk and blind
When tyrants, cloven-hoof'd in heart and brain,
Made murder pastime, and the tardy wind
Bore fresh glad tidings o'er the groaning main
Of hecatombs on Moloch's altar slain !
Kneel, Saint of Carnage !—kneel, but not to Baal ;
Kneel, but alone, with none to laud thy zeal ;
For the hour cometh when the reed shall fail
On which the wicked lean. But wherefore kneel ?
Can the worn stone repent, and weep, and feel ?
Still harder granite forms the bosom-core
Of him who laugh'd when freedom's thousands fell.
Hark, 'tis the voice, that erst of battle's roar
Was wont too oft from yonder tower to tell,
Pealing, at thy command, o'er crash and yell,
And fiend-like faces, reddening in the light
Of streets, that crimson'd midnight with their glare,
When England hired the hell-hounds of the fight,
Because men broke, in their sublime despair,
The bonds which nature could no longer bear !
Hark, 'tis the *iron* voice ! and still to thee
It speaks of death. Perchance, some child of clay,
Some wo-worn thrall of long iniquity,
Some drudge, whose mate can yet afford to pay
For decent pray'rs, treading the gloomy way
Which all must tread, is gone to her long rest,
And last account—a dread one *thine* will be !
Of means atrocious, used for ends unbless'd !
And joy—for what ? For guilty victory ;
States bought and sold by fraud to tyranny ;
Slaves arm'd to kill ; the free by slaves enslaved ;
Red havoc's carnival from shore to shore ;
Sons slaughter'd, widows childless, realms depraved ;
And Britain's treasures pour'd in seas of gore,
Till lords ask alms, and fiercely growl for more !
Yes, when your country is one vast disease,
And failing fortunes sadden every door—
These, O ye quacks ! these are your remedies ; (g)
Alms for the rich !—a bread-tax for the poor !
Soul-purchased harvest on the indignant moor !
Thus the wing'd victor of a hundred fights,
The warrior ship, bows low her banner'd head,
When through her planks the sea-born reptile bites
Its deadly way—and sinks in ocean's bed,
Vanquish'd by worms. ' What then ? The worms were fed.'
Will not God smite thee black, thou whited wall ?
Thy life is lawless, and thy law a lie,
Or nature is a dream unnatural.
Look on the clouds, the streams, the earth, the sky :
Lo, all is interchange and harmony !
Where is the gorgeous pomp which, yester morn,
Curtain'd yon orb with amber, fold on fold ?
Behold it in the blue of Rivelin, borne
To feed the all-feeding seas ! the molten gold
Is flowing pale in Loxley's crystal cold,
To kindle into beauty tree and flower,
And wake to verdant life hill, vale, and plain.
Cloud trades with river, and exchange is power : (h)
But should the clouds, the streams, the winds disdain
Harmonious intercourse, nor dew nor rain

Would forest-crown the mountains; airless day
Would blast, on Kinderscout, the heathy glow;
No purply green would meeken into gray,
O'er Don at eve; no sound of river's flow
Disturb the sepulchre of all below.

VI.

"O for a ship—a ship!—the wing of steam!
To bear us from the land where toil, despised,
Is robb'd and scourged, and life's best prospects seem
Sad as the couch of patience agonized!
Is there no land where useful men are prized
By those they feed? Or will there never be
For hope a refuge and a dwelling place,
Where tyrants, in their mad rapacity,
Shake not their clench'd fists in the Almighty's face,
And cry—'Thou fool!'—Shall glorious seas embrace
A thousand shores in vain? Shall paupers grow
Where he hath said the eagle's young shall feed?
Shall hopeless tears to water deserts flow,
While flow his mighty streams, with none to heed,
And make fertility a baneful weed?
Poor bread-tax'd slaves, have ye no hope on earth?
Yes, God from evil still educes good;
Sublime events are rushing to their birth;
Lo, tyrants by their victims are withstood!
And Freedom's seed still grows, though steep'd in blood!
When by our Father's voice the skies are riven,
That, like the winnow'd chaff, disease may fly;
And seas are shaken by the breath of heaven,
Lest in their depths the living spirit die;
Man views the scene with awed but grateful eye,
And trembling feels, could God abuse his power,
Nor man, nor nature, would endure an hour.
But there is mercy in his seeming wrath;
It smites to save—not, tyrant-like, to slay;
And storms have beauty, as the lily hath:
Grand are the clouds that, mirror'd on the bay,
Roll, like the shadows of lost worlds, away,
When bursts through broken gloom the startled light;
Grand are the waves that, like that broken gloom,
Are smitten into splendour by his might;
And glorious is the storm's tremendous boom,
Although it waileth o'er a watery tomb,
And is a dreadful ode on ocean's drown'd.
Despond not, then, ye plunder'd sons of trade!
Hope's wounded wing shall yet disdain the ground,
And Commerce, while the powers of evil fade,
Shout o'er all seas—'All lands for me were made!'
Her's are the apostles destined to go forth
Upon the wings of mighty winds, and preach
Christ crucified! To her the south and north
Look through their tempests; and her lore shall reach
Their farthest ice, if life be there to teach.
Yes, world-reforming Commerce! one by one
Thou vanquishest earth's tyrants! and the hour
Cometh when all shall fall before thee—gone
Their splendour, fall'n their trophies, lost their power.
Then o'er th' enfranchised nations wilt thou shower,
Like dew-drops from the pinions of the dove,
Plenty and peace; and never more on thee
Shall bondage wait; but, as the thoughts of love,
Free shalt thou fly, unchainable and free;
And men, thenceforth, shall call thee 'Liberty!'

VII.

"Farewell, my friends! we part, no more to meet
As trampled worms; but we shall meet again
At God's right hand, and our Redeemer's feet!
And oft—how oft!—meantime, your solemn strain
Shall roll from Shirecliffe's side, o'er vale and plain.
O keep the seventh day holy, wheresoe'er
Ye be, poor sons of toil! sell not to those
Who sold your freedom, sell not for a sneer
Your day of rest; but worship God, where glows
The flame-tipp'd spire, or blooms the wild wood-rose.
Hallow this day to gladness! for, behold,
The spoilers watch, to steal your Sabbath too!
Shall seven days' toil for six days' bread be sold? (1)
Forget not yet land-butcher'd Peterloo!
Are ye not bread-tax'd? What they did they do,
And then most treacherous when they holiest seem,
At your salvation here take deadliest aim.
O trust them not! but henceforth rightly deem
Of sordid fiends, who murder hope and shame,
And for a bread-tax, wrapp'd the world in flame.
Nor marvel if, athwart the exulting seas,
A steam-highway bring soon to their fire-sides
War, and its long inflicted miseries,
To plough them with the plough which havoc guides,
Despite their wide-wing'd sway o'er winds and tides.
Meantime, like wolves full gorged, they lick their jaws,
And, sick of prey, roll wide their eyes for more;
But from their black and crime-distended maws
Eject not yet the clotted gold and gore,
The price of souls, death-freed on many a shore."

VIII.

He ceased—but still, while young and old retired,
Beneath th' autumnal tree, and concave blue,
Stood, like the statue of a man inspired!
And many an eye turn'd fondly back, to view
His face, more saint-like than e'er pencil drew.
Then gush'd his tears. He cast a lingering look
On farthest moors—dear scenes, remember'd well!
And thought of that lone church and verdant nook
Where sleeps his mother, in the Alpine dell.
"I am alone." he said—and sigh'd "Farewell!"
Alone—but, oh, not unbeloved thou art!
Nor undeplored, Miles Gordon, shalt thou sleep
In death's cold arms. Full many a manly heart
Shall weep o'er thee; the orphan'd five shall weep
The mother of the fatherless shall steep
Thy shroud in tears—such tears as mothers shed!
Nor shall the patriot bard refuse to pay
Melodious honours to the patriot dead,
And write above his narrow house of clay,
That all, save righteous deeds, must pass away.
But shall they lay thy bones, O desert-born,
Where no wild bird hears infant rivers flow?
Oh, not beneath that cloud, which night would scorn,
Not in vile earth, where flowers refuse to grow,
And vanity, in sables, mimics wo;
Not in yon rank churchyard, where buried lie
Tyrant and slave, polluting still the air;
But where the rude heath hears the plover cry,
And swings the chainless cloud o'er summits bare;
There shouldst thou rest—thy heart was ever there!
There shouldst thou rest, beneath the mountain wind,
Far from the pauper's grave, the despot's door;
Though few would seek thy home, and fewer find
Thy brief inscription on the shadow'd moor:—
"Here lies the preacher of the plunder'd poor."

NOTES.

(1) This baneful corporation may have reclaimed half a dozen drunkards; but it is a dear police, if

for every brawl prevented, it has made fifty thousand worse than Spanish serviles. Certainly the most zealous ally of tyranny in England is old Methodism, sometimes called New Popery. But the fall of this corrupt power will be as signal as its rise, and more rapid. Even as a fashion, it is everywhere on the decline, with the great vulgar and the small, its only votaries—*dealers* excepted, and women of both sexes. Great as is the skill with which its Grand Masters use the petticoats to subvert the breeches; deadly as is the cunning with which the modern Loyolas seek the conservation of wrongs in the holy name of Jesus; they will soon have no apology but the Johannaites, and no hope but in a junction with them—unless there be truth in the report, that *the poor fishermen* have five millions in the three per cents. Though dismal their Reign of Terror, and long-armed their Holy Inquisition, they must condescend to learn and teach what is useful, or go where all nuisances go. The conjurer has gone already; the quack-doctor, and the quack-parson remain.

(b) On this 1st December, 1830, the people of Sheffield meet to petition for Reform in Parliament. Where are the Saints? Will they attend! Oh, fie! No. But, I trust we shall have the benefit of their prayers, and then we may expect a Reform after their own hearts—old abuses, under a worse cover; as if the devil, for a hoax, were to cloak himself in the *patriotism* of the Methodist Conference. Let them pray fervently; for who knows what Reform may bring? Who knows but the accursed drama may be made a state engine, for the gratuitous education of the people in politics and morals? Heaven forefend, that the chapels of the fanatics should be converted into theatres of amusement and instruction.

(c) It is a horrible fact, that not one petition for peace emanated from the great body of religionists in England, during twenty-five years of war against the laws of God and the rights of man. Of the fruits of that warfare, what remain? The Bread-tax!—the great Unpaid!—a debt of eight hundred millions!—and Russia master of Europe!

(d) Posterity will scarcely believe, that a nation which calls itself the most religious and enlightened on earth, has endured for seventeen years a law which sacrifices the interests of all the productive classes to the rapacity of a few haughty drones, who invent no gunpowder, improve no machinery, and run no risk, but of setting fire to everything in the country, except the Thames. Have our holy men objected to this law? They never heard of it. It will be time enough for solemn triflers to ask what are the causes of distress in England, when the Corn Bill is written in blood and fire over every parish. While millions of Hindoos died of famine, the Clives and Clivelings of splendid Calcutta could not believe that there was distress in India. But we are not Hindoos; we may die, but not by millions. While our Missionaries are sent to the Ganges, Ireland sends her's to the Ouse and the Waveny; and dreadful are the mysteries which her wrongs have taught them to teach. Oh, but we must exert ourselves! And why must we exert ourselves, if increase of profits will not buy an increase of bread? To seek substitutes for bread were equally idle. There is no escape. If, rather than pay the price of wheat for potatoes, we resolve to eat salt and sand, the monopolists will tax the desert, and lay an interdict on Sahara.

(e) If the patrons of Missionaries would know what their deeds are worth, they have only to contrast the past with the present state of Otaheitee. That island, when first discovered, had a population of one hundred and fifty thousand, living in ease—now reduced to less than twenty thousand, living in misery, and driven to church by the cudgel. The persons who furnish funds for such cudgelling, while the People of England are dying of famine, *may* be the salt of the earth; but the hour cometh when God, through the million voices of the starving, will put to them this tremendous question—"What did ye with the lent talent?"

(f) In that happy commercial country, where the law for recovering a debt of ten pounds signifies the loss of a hundred, the expression of countenance here alluded to might be termed national—if the *tabooed* and their imitators constitute the nation. At once hideous and peculiar, it is neither a grin, nor a frown, nor a sneer. It is not bravado—it is not calmness. If it resemble Turkish ferocity, it does not resemble Turkish dignity. It is a compound of the confident official air of the hangman placing the knot, and the dogged yet apprehensive look of the butcher, who has stolen the calf which he pushes with one hand, while he grasps his knife in the other. The foreigner who, for the first time, sees a newly arrived bread-tax-eater, has seen the "Corn-law-scowl;" he beholds it with surprise, disgust, and scorn; but the poor Englishman, when the *horrid thing* approaches him, instinctively thrusts his hands into his breeches pockets, and, with an indescribable mixture of shrug and bow, drops his under jaw, as if he expected a thief in the constable.

(g) I am sorry to offend our *honourable men*; but the vast importance of my object must plead my excuse. Errors in agricultural legislation are soon remedied, because, in a fully-peopled country, (where the productions of the land pay a reserved profit in the shape of rent, over and above the fair profit of capital,) such errors come speedily home to the landlord, who is the legislator. But if the consumer refuse to pay the tax on the manufacturer's productions, that tax may go on, like the bread-tax, until manufacturers and nations are ruined. But for enormous errors of this sort, Charles the Tenth of France would not have lost his throne. The Bourbons might have played the tyrant, had they not played the ignoramus. I sometimes dare to hope that the horrible Corn-Law is thus destined to abate the landed nuisance here. It is a tax which must come to an end; but Robert Shallow, Esq., acts as if he thought it would last for ever. Let him continue so to act, until he cease to be measured *by the shadow he casts*. But if it is *written* that capital and skill shall no longer find profitable employment here, we happily know that liberal institutions are spreading over the Continent, and that the Channel is neither impassable, nor three thousand miles wide. There is an America in Europe, which any useful man who pleases may reach in a few hours, leaving his ice-hearted oppressors to settle the account with the mortgagees, and the two many-bellied monsters, "Nothing-to-do," and "Nothing-to-eat," who will ask them whether they or God created the land, and whether it was intended to be a blessing or a curse!

The partisans of the present ministers are already opening their batteries in favour of the landlords. In the leading article of the *New Monthly Magazine* we are told, that land pays only 2½ per cent. But so long as the Corn-Law continues, it is impossible to ascertain whether land pays 2½ or 20 per cent. Every man, however, may state the facts of the case, as far as he knows them. I know an estate which, thirty years ago, sold for £500: the rent is now £50 per annum, or 10 per cent. upon the cost price. Instead of asking what this estate would sell for, let us contrast the fortunes of the owner, with those of his neighbour, the patient, long-eared, iron master. The capital of the latter is reduced from £100,000 to £10,000, and he would be glad to receive 2½ per cent. upon the reduced sum. Yet he maintains scores of families, while the unproductive complaining landowner, without risk, and without exertion, is obtaining about forty times his profits. Oh, this is but one instance, we shall be told! There are thousands of such instances, and those which differ from it are exceptions to the rule.

(h) If a thousand square miles of fertile land could drop from the moon, and become a part of this island, they would furnish a temporary remedy for some of the evils under which we labour; but a free trade in corn would be a remedy at once effectual and lasting, it would make all the fertile land in the world gradually available to us as profit and wages.

(i) If Sunday were in the market, the bread-tax-eaters would buy it; but they would not (for they could not, if we are to be bread-taxed) give us more bread for seven days' labour than we now obtain for six.

CORN-LAW RHYMES.

To all who revere the Memory of JEREMY BENTHAM, our second LOCKE, and wish to promote the greatest happiness of the greatest number for the greatest length of time, I inscribe these "Corn-Law Rhymes."

SONG.

TUNE—"*The Land o' the Leal.*"

Where the poor cease to pay,
Go, lov'd one, and rest!
Thou art wearing away
To the land of the blest.
Our father is gone
Where the wrong'd are forgiven,
And that dearest one,
Thy husband, in heaven.

No toil in despair,
No tyrant, no slave,
No bread-tax is there,
With a maw like the grave.
But the poacher, thy pride,
Whelm'd in ocean afar;
And his brother, who died
Land-butcher'd in war;

And their mother, who sank
Broken-hearted to rest;
And the baby, that drank
'Till it froze on her breast;
With tears, and with smiles,
Are waiting for thee,
In the beautiful isles
Where the wrong'd are the free.

Go, loved one, and rest
Where the poor cease to pay!
To the land of the blest
Thou art wearing away;
But the son of thy pain
Will yet stay with me,
And poor little Jane
Look sadly like thee.

SONG.

TUNE—"*Robin Adair.*"

Child, is thy father dead?
Father is gone!
Why did they tax his bread?
God's will be done!
Mother has sold her bed;
Better to die than wed!
Where shall she lay her head?
Home we have none!

Father clamm'd thrice a week—
God's will be done!
Long for work did he seek,
Work he found none.
Tears on his hollow cheek
Told what no tongue could speak:
Why did his master break?
God's will be done!

Doctor said air was best—
Food we had none;
Father, with panting breast,
Groan'd to be gone:
Now he is with the blest—
Mother says death is best!
We have no place of rest—
Yes, ye have one!

THE FOUR DEARS.

Dear Sugar, dear Tea, and dear Corn,
Conspired with dear Representation,
To laugh worth and honour to scorn,
And beggar the whole British nation.

Let us bribe the dear sharks, said dear Tea;
Bribe, bribe, said dear Representation;
Then buy with their own the dear humbugg'd, and be
The bulwarks of Tory dictation.

Dear Sugar and Tea, said dear Corn,
Be true to dear Representation;
And then the dear crown will be worn,
But to dignify dearest taxation.

Dear Sugar, dear Corn, and dear Tea,
Stick to me, said dear Representation;
Let us still pull together, and we
Shall still rob the dear British nation.

THE TAXED CAKE.

Give, give, they cry—and take!
For wilful men are they
Who tax'd our cake, and took our cake,
To throw our cake away.

The cake grows less and less,
For profits lessen too;
But land will pay, at last, I guess,
For land-won Waterloo.

They mix our bread with bran—
They call potatoes bread;
And, get who may, or keep who can,
The starv'd, they say, are fed.

Our rivals fatten fast;
But we are free to pay;
And dearly they shall pay, at last,
Who threw our cake away.

Lend, lend thy wing, O steam,
And bear me to some clime
Where splendid beggars dare not dream
That law's best fruit is crime!

O Landlord's Devil, take
Thy own elect, I pray,
Who tax'd our cake, and took our cake,
To throw our cake away!

WHAT IS BAD GOVERNMENT?

What is bad government, thou slave,
Whom robbers represent?
What is bad government, thou knave,
Who lov'st bad government?

It is the deadly *Will*, that takes
What labour ought to keep;
It is the deadly *Power*, that makes
Bread dear, and labour cheap.

THE DEATH FEAST.

The birth-day, or the wedding-day,
Let happier mourners keep:
To Death my vestal vows I pay,
And try in vain to weep.
Some griefs the strongest soul might shake,
And I such griefs have had;
My brain is hot—but they mistake
Who deem that I am mad.
My father died—my mother died—
Four orphans poor were we;
My brother John work'd hard, and tried
To smile on Jane and me.
But work grew scarce, while bread grew dear,
And wages lessen'd too;
For Irish hordes were bidders here,
Our half-paid work to do.
Yet still he strove, with failing breath
And sinking cheek, to save
Consumptive Jane from early death—
Then join'd her in the grave.
His watery hand in mine I took,
And kiss'd him till he slept;
Oh, still I see his dying look!
He tried to smile, and wept!
I bought his coffin with my bed,
My gown bought earth and prayer;
I pawn'd my mother's ring for bread—
I pawn'd my father's chair.
My Bible yet remains to sell,
And yet unsold shall be;
But language fails my woes to tell—
Even crumbs were scarce with me.
I sold poor Jane's gray linnet then—
It cost a groat a-year;
I sold John's hen—and miss'd the hen,
When eggs were selling dear:
For autumn nights seem'd wintry cold,
While seldom blaz'd my fire;
And eight times eight no more I sold
When eggs were getting higher.
But still I glean the moor and heath;
I wash, they say, with skill;
And Workhouse bread ne'er cross'd my teeth—
I trust it never will.
But when the day on which John died
Returns with all its gloom,
I seek kind friends, and beg, with pride,
A banquet for the tomb.
One friend, my brother James, at least,
Comes then with me to dine;
Let others keep the marriage-feast,
The funeral feast is mine.

For then on them I fondly call,
And then they live again!
To-morrow is our festival
Of Death, and John, and Jane.
E'en now, behold! they look on me,
Exulting from the skies,
While angels round them weep to see
The tears gush from their eyes!
I cannot weep—why can I not?
My tears refuse to flow:
My feet are cold—my brain is hot—
Is fever madness?—No.
Thou smilest, and in scorn—but thou,
Couldst thou forget the dead?
No common beggar courtsies now,
And begs for burial bread.

BURNS, FROM THE DEAD.

Maclather, the Radical barber of Perth,
Was the saddest of all politicians on earth;
But his business increased while his thoughts darker grew,
For his shop was a news-shop and barber's shop too.
One night he lay sleepless, reflecting with awe
On the laws of the lawless, and wrongs that are law,
When a stranger approach'd, with a voice and a stride
That awoke the good woman asleep at his side.
Like Tell from the torrent, or Burns from the brae,
Or Cromwell in youth, or the Hampden of Gray,
He came—and around his broad brow, as he spoke,
His black locks were curl'd, like the gnarl of the oak.
But his voice—oh! its tones were the music of scorn,
The laugh of a trumpet, impatient for morn!
"Come, bring me a pen, boy! and all shall know soon
That still I am Bobby, the bard o' the Doon;
Yes, bring me a pen, and I'll write thee an ode
On the law that sends tax-eaten Britons abroad."
"Ay, write me," said Mac, with a sigh like a rope,
"An ode on the bread-tax that banishes hope."
Mac brought him a pen, and he took it and wrote,
While laughing, while talking, while glooming in thought,
While glow'ring at Meg, who lay mute as the grave,
As he hutch'd up his breeches, then scribbled a stave.

"Awake sate the Devil, and felt quite unwell
With scheming how best he might send souls to hell,
When at last he exclaim'd, as he rose with a spring,
'A Bread-tax, a Bread-tax, will just be the thing!
To beggar the wealthy, by robbing the poor,
To mortgage the meadow, by stealing the moor,
To turn into monsters the young and the old,
There's nought like a Bread-tax, with paper or gold.
France, once the great nation, held others in scorn;
But when could France boast of her kings of dear corn?
In the page of her glory bright names may be read,
But the ace of all titles is—Lord of Dear Bread.
Rome rose like the sun but in darkness to set;
For her Lords of the Bread-tax Rome never had yet;
Her heroes and Neroes, great names we may call,
But Lord of the Bread-tax is greater than all.
A Bread-tax will bring me, all cursing dear corn,
The proud and the splendid, the tatter'd and torn,
From palace and hovel, from woodland and street,
At my table as equals and brothers to meet.
There seated with me, round the broad brimstone bowl,
They shall quaff the *true blue* for the health of the soul;
And pledge me in bumpers with horror for glee,
May the God of the good send all Tories to me!

My philosopher's stone is the *moral* sublime;
A Bread-tax will turn all it touches to crime.
Then hey for a Bread-tax! hark, forward, soho!
That my halls may be cramm'd with the high and the low.'
So saying, he hied to the bought and the sold,
And whisper'd the haughty, the base, and the cold,
Where they lay in their venom, all toad-like and grim,
How to damn souls on earth, and fill hell to the brim."
Thus ended the poet; and fled, like a dream,
O'er valley, and torrent, and woodland, and stream,
Through scenes of his loves, in the morn of his day,
When he met the fond lasses among the sweet hay.
And the moon and the stars, over mountain and moor,
Look'd slyly on Bobby, the honest and poor, [syne,
While he thought of the sprees o' the bonny lang-
When the gloss of his locks was like gold from the mine.

ELEGY.

O Huskisson! O Huskisson!
O Huskisson, in vain our friend!
Why hast thou left thy work undone?
Of good begun is this the end?
Thou should'st have liv'd, if they remain
Who fetter'd us, and hated thee.
O Huskisson, our friend in vain!
Where now are hope and liberty?
Thou should'st have lived, if with thee dies
The poor man's hope of better days.
Time stops to weep, but yet shall rise
The sun whose beams shall write thy praise.
Thy widow weeps—but what is she,
And what her paltry common wo?
Worlds weep—and *millions* fast for thee.
Our hope is gone! why didst thou go?
Pleased hell awhile suspends his breath,
Then shouts in joy, and laughs in hate;
And plague and famine call on death
Their jubilee to celebrate.
A *shadow* bids improvement stand,
While faster flow a nation's tears.
O dead man! with thy pallid hand,
Thou rollest back the tide of years!

THE BLACK HOLE OF CALCUTTA.

What for Saxon, Frank, and Hun,
What hath England's bread-tax done?
Ask the struggle and the groan
For the shadow of a bone;
Like a strife for life, for life,
Hand to hand, and knife to knife,

Hopeless trader! answer me,
What hath bread-tax done for thee? [a]
Ask thy lost and owing debts;
Ask our bankrupt-throng'd Gazettes.
Clothier, proud of Peterloo!
Ironmaster, loyal too!
What hath bread-tax done for you?
Let the Yankee tariff tell,
None to buy, and all to sell;
Useless buildings, castle strong,
Hundred thousands, worth a song;
Starving workmen, warehouse full,
Saxon web, from Polish wool,
Grown where grew the wanted wheat,
Which we might not buy and eat.

Merchant, bread-tax'd trade wont pay—
Profits lessen every day;
Sell thy stock, and realize,
Let thy streeted chimneys rise;
And when bread-tax'd ten are two,
Learn what bread-tax'd rents can do.
Sneak! that would'st for groat a-year
Sell thy soul, and sell it dear!
Self-robb'd servile! sold, not bought,
For the shadow of a groat!
Unbribed Judas! what thy gain,
By sad Europe's millions slain—
By our treasure's, pour'd in blood
Over battle-field and flood!
Bread-tax'd profits, endless care,
Competition in despair.
With thy bile and with thy gear,
Wheels and shuttles gainless here,
With the remnant of thy all,
Whither, reptile, wilt thou crawl?
What hath bread-tax done for me?
Farmer, what for thine and thee?
Ask of those who toil to live,
And the price they cannot give;
Ask our hearths, our gainless marts,
Ask thy children's broken hearts,
Ask their mother, sad and gray,
Destined yet to parish pay.

Bread-tax'd weaver, all can see
What that tax hath done for thee
And thy children, vilely led,
Singing hymns for shameful bread,
Till the stones of every street
Know their little naked feet.

Building lawyer's nominee!
What hath bread-tax done for thee?
Ask thy fainting thoughts that strive
But to keep despair alive;
Ask thy list of friends betray'd,
Houses empty, rents unpaid,
Rising streets and falling rents,
Money-fights for half per cents;
Ask yon piles, all bread-tax built,
Guiltless, yet the cause of guilt,
Swallowing fortunes, spreading woes,
Losing, to make others lose.
Breadtax-eating absentee,
What hath bread-tax done for thee?—
Cramm'd thee, from our children's plates,
Made thee all that Nature hates,
Fill'd thy skin with untax'd wine,
Fill'd thy purse with cash of mine,
Fill'd thy breast with hellish schemes,
Fill'd thy head with fatal dreams—
Of potatoes basely sold
At the price of wheat in gold,
And of Britons sty'd to eat
Wheat-priced roots instead of wheat.

England! what for mine and me,
What hath bread-tax done for thee?
It hath shewn what kinglings are,
Stripped thy hideous idols bare,
Sold thy greatness, stain'd thy name,
Struck thee from the rolls of fame,
Given thy fields to civil strife,
Changed thy falchion for the knife,
To th' invading knout consign'd
Basest back, and meanest mind,
Cursed thy harvests, cursed thy land,
Hunger-stung thy skill'd right hand,
Sent thy riches to thy foes,

Kick'd thy breech, and tweak'd thy nose,
And beneath the western skies
Sown the worm that never dies.

Man of Consols, hark to me!
What shall bread-tax do for thee?
Rob thee for the dead-alive,
Pawn thy thousands ten for five,
And, ere yet its work be done,
Pawn thy thousands five for one.

What shall bread-tax yet for thee,
Palaced pauper? We shall see.
It shall tame thee and thy heirs,
Beggar them and beggar their's,
Melt thy plate, for which we paid,
Buy ye breeches ready made,
Sell my lady's tax-bought gown,
And the lands thou call'st thy own.
Then of courses five or more,
Grapery, horse-race, coach-and-four,
Pamper'd fox-hounds, starving men,
Whores and bastards, nine or ten,
Twenty flunkies fat and gay,
Whip and jail for holiday,
Paid informer, poacher pale,
Sneaker's license, poison'd ale,
Seat in senate, seat on bench,
Pension'd lad, or wife, or wench,
Fiddling parson, Sunday card,
Pimp, and dedicating bard—
On the broad and bare highway,
Toiling there for groat a-day,
We will talk to thee and thine,
Till thy wretches envy mine,
Till thy paunch of baseness howl,
Till thou seem to have a soul.

Peer, too just, too proud to share
Millions wrung from toil and care!
Righteous peer, whose fathers fed
England's poor with untax'd bread!
Ancient peer, whose stainless name
Ages old have given to fame!—
What shall bread-tax do for thee?
Make thee poor as mine and me:
Drive thee from thy marble halls
To some hovel's squalid walls;
Drive thee from the land of crimes,
Houseless, into foreign climes,
There to sicken, there to sigh,
Steep thy soul in tears, and die—
Like a flower from summer's glow,
Withering on the Polar snow.

Church bedew'd with martyrs' blood,
Mother of the wise and good!
Temple of our smiles and tears,
Hoary with the frost of years!
Holy church, eternal, true!
What for thee will bread-tax do?
It will strip thee bare as she
Whom a despot stripp'd for thee;
Of thy surplice make thy pall,
Low'r thy pride, and take thy all—
Save thy truth, establish'd well,
Which—when spire and pinnacle,
Gorgeous arch, and figured stone,
Cease to tell of glories gone—
Still shall speak of thee and Him
Whom adore the Seraphim.

Power, which, likest Heaven's, might seem
Glorious once in freedom's beam;
Once by tyrants felt and fear'd,
Still as freedom's dust revered!
Throne, established by the good,
Not unstain'd with patriot blood,
Not unwatch'd by patriot fears,
Not unwept by patriot tears!
What shall bread-tax do for thee,
Venerable Monarchy?
Dreams of evil, spare my sight!
Let that horror rest in night.

CAGED RATS.

Ye coop us up, and tax our bread,
And wonder why we pine;
But ye are fat, and round, and red,
And fill'd with tax-bought wine.
Thus twelve rats starve while three rats thrive,
(Like you on mine and me,)
When fifteen rats are caged alive,
With food for nine and three.

Haste! Havoc's torch begins to glow—
The ending is begun;
Make haste! Destruction thinks ye slow;
Make haste to be undone!
Why are ye call'd "my Lord" and "Squire,"
While fed by mine and me,
And wringing food, and clothes, and fire,
From bread-tax'd misery?

Make haste, slow rogues! *prohibit* trade, (b)
Prohibit honest gain;
Turn all the good that God hath made
To fear, and hate, and pain;
Till beggars all, assassins all,
All cannibals we be,
And death shall have no funeral
From shipless sea to sea.

THE RECORDING ANGEL.

I.

I am not death, O King! nor by him sent
O'er thy sad heart my pinions black to wave;
But, when men die, I stand, in silence bent,
Writing the deeds of warrior, saint, or slave,
And canonize the timid and the brave.
They die, but after them their actions live,
For good or ill. Speak, then, if thou wouldst be,
Though bad, not worst; and mercy may forgive
The cureless past. What shall I write of *thee*?
Shall toil be plunder'd still—or trade be free?
Know'st thou the law by which Kings govern well,
The golden law—"Reign not for some but all?"
Shall I to men, and to the immortals tell
That thou didst fetter hope, or disenthrall?
O answer, ere the fatal curtain fall!
To-morrow, and the Sultan is forgot
Even in the harem; but on realms oppress'd
The scar remains, where pass'd the iron hot
With which he sear'd them; and wrongs unredress'd
Cry to the hopeless dead—"Ye shall not rest!"
Would'st thou be mourn'd with curses or with tears?
As angels mourn the blow that casts aside
The axle of a world, for years and years
Turning the seasons back, and all their pride?
Or as men mourn a godlike friend who died?
Thou hast, men say, for misery's tear a sigh;

But if thy heart is warm, 'tis warm in vain.
King of the Bread-Tax! dearly didst thou buy
That title. Shall it evermore remain
To mock thy virtues, an eternal stain?

II.

No answer?—Oft the meanest of mankind,
Gay as "The Tenth," and polish'd as their swords,
Have rival'd Nash in etiquette of mind,
And all the littleness of forms and words;
But thou art King of Squires, and reign'st for Lords!
To teach thy sire, earth wept a sea of gore;
He lived unteachable, and died untaught
By curses, wrung from millions. It is o'er,
And thou wast heir of all his madness wrought;
Be this thy plea—all else availeth nought.
But nations beggar'd, that ye might bequeath
Old bonds to France redeem'd! and Peterloo
Immortal! and Napoleon's deathless death!
These were such deeds as vulgar kings can do;
They made thee famous, but not matchless too.
King of Dear Corn! Time hears, with ceaseless groan,
Time ever hears, sad names of hate and dread:
But thou, thou only, of all monarchs known,
Didst legislate *against* thy People's bread!
King of the Corn-Laws! *thus* wilt thou be read!
For ever thus. A monarch calls thee—Go:
And if there be, in other worlds, a throne
That waits a prince unequall'd, be not slow
To seize the vacant seat—it is thine own;
King of Dear Corn! thou art "thyself alone!"
Safe is thy fame. 'Tis come, th' unerring hour
That calls even kings to their account away;
And o'er thee frowns a shadow and a power
To quench the stars, and turn the living day
Black. Yoked below, pant Horror and Dismay;
The steeds, O King! with soundless speed, that drag
Thee, and a king more dreaded than his Lord,
The King of Kings—O Death! behold his flag—
The wormy shroud! his sceptre, crown, and sword—
Worms! his dread slaves—worms, worms that do his word!
But where are thine! *thy* slaves! *thy* flatterers?—Gone.
Nor need'st thou sigh for parasite or sage;
For, lo! the mightiest of all kings, but one,
(Lord of the dust that once was youth and age,)
Attends thee fallen! Behold his equipage!
How strange a chariot serves both him and thee!
But Death rides royally—no stop, no stay;
On, on! far hence thy final home must be.
What cloud swings there? A world that turns from day
Her mountains. Death drives well—Away! Away!
As when to ships, which mists at sea surround,
The dangerous fog assumes a golden hue,
While rocks draw near with sudden breakers bound,
And distant mountains, reeling into view,
Lift o'er the clouds their cliffs of airy blue;
So, to thy soul, releas'd from mortal ties,
Scenes grand, and wild, and terrible, and new,
Strange lands, strange seas, the stars of unknown skies—
The realms of death with all their hosts arise.
King of Dear Corn! the dead have heard that name;
They come—imperial spectres throng to meet
Him, who, at once, eclipsed their dismal fame.
But why should despots long to kiss thy feet?
Did Nero starve his People? No—O shame!
He only hymn'd the flames that, street by street,
Swept Rome, no longer Roman;—it is meet
That greatness bow to greatest. Famine's lord!
What pallid crowds plebeian round thee rise!
Sent to sad graves by human fiends abhorr'd,
They come to thank thee with their tears and sighs:—
Nay, shrink not from the cloud of hollow eyes!
Thou know'st their children live to toil and pine,
And that eternity's long roll supplies
No nickname, deathless, grand, and just as thine.
But who is she, of aspect masculine,
Amid the silent moving silently,
With saddest step but not unroyal air,
And gazing like an injured friend on thee?
There is sublimity in her despair!
O King! that pitying look is hard to bear!
Thee she forgives, but not the havoc made
By thy meek servants and most gracious foes,
Who sagely interdict, hope, profit, trade.
And must thy name be link'd for aye with those—
"The triple hundred kinglings"—who oppose
All change but evil change; and, deaf and blind,
Refute the sun and ocean as he flows?
While daily, hourly, in their war on mind,
They scourge again the Saviour of mankind.
O why didst thou obey them from thy throne?
Thou might'st have been, alas! thou wouldst not be
King of the People! (would that thou hadst known
How almost godlike 'tis to rule the free!)—
Or lived a tyrant! not the nominee
Of tyrants, wallowing in their victim's wo,
And arm'd to curse mankind, with worse than stings.
Compared with thine, their deeds are night on snow:—
The breath of dungeons on a seraph's wings!
Derision! who would reign where such are kings?
But to be slave—if thou wert willing slave—
Of mean barbarians; to be signing clerk
Of palaced almoner, and tax-fed knave;
To wear their livery, and their badge, and mark;
To love the light, and yet to choose the dark;—
This, this was vile, and did to millions wrong
Not to be borne by men who boast a spark
Of manly worth. O Tamer of the strong!
Wake thy slow angel, God! He slumbers long—
His voice of reformation should be heard,
His hand be active, not to overturn,
But to restore; ere, sick with hope deferr'd,
The good despond; ere lord and peasant mourn,
Homeless alike; ere Waste and Havoc spurn,
With hand and foot, the dust of Power and Pride;
While tower and temple at their bidding burn,
And the land reels, and rocks from side to side,
A sailless wreck, with none to save or guide;
A sailless wreck, with multitudes to do
Deeds more accursed than pirate's deck e'er saw;
A helmless wreck, a famine-frantic crew, (c)
All rage and hunger, hand, and voice, and maw;
And on that rolling wreck, no food, no hope, no law!

O LORD, HOW LONG?

Up, bread-tax'd slave! and sagely curse
Greek, Russian, Swede, and Turk;
For we have better men, and worse,
Than honest Hare and Burke;
Proud men who cannot live, *they say*,
Unless they plunder thee!
But thou art free to toil and pay—
And so is England free.

Up, widow, up, and swing the fly ;
Or push the grating file !
Our bread is tax'd, and rents are high,
That wolves may burst with bile.
Sire of the hopeless ! canst thou sleep ?
Up, up, and toil for gouls,
Who drink our tears, but never weep,
And soulless eat our souls !

Child, what hast thou with sleep to do ?
Awake, and dry thine eyes !
Thy tiny hands must labour too ;
Our bread is tax'd—arise !
Arise, and toil long hours twice seven,
For pennies two or three ;
Thy woes make angels weep in Heaven—
But England still is free.

Up, weary man, of eighty-five,
And toil in hopeless wo !
Our bread is tax'd, our rivals thrive,
Our gods will have it so.
Yet God is undethron'd on high,
And undethroned will be :
Father of all ! hear Thou our cry,
And England *shall* be free !

Methinks, thy nation-wedding waves
Upbraid us as they flow ;
Thy winds, disdaining fetter'd slaves,
Reproach us as they blow ;
Methinks thy bolts are waxing hot,
Thy clouds have voices too ;
"Father !" they cry, "hast thou forgot
Land-butcher'd Peterloo ?"

"O Vengeance !"—No, forgive, forgive !
'Tis frailty still that errs :
"Forgive ?—Revenge ! Shall murderers live ?"
Christ bless'd *his* murderers.
Father, we only ask our own ;
We say, "Be commerce free ;
Let barter have his mutton-bone—
Let toil be liberty."

They smite in vain who smite with swords,
And scourge with vollied fire ;
Our weapon is the whip of words,
And truth's all-teaching ire ; (d)
The blow it gives, the wound it makes,
Life yet unborn shall see,
And shake it, like a whip of snakes,
At unborn Villany !

THE TREE OF RIVELIN.

The lightning, like an Arab, cross'd
The moon's dark path on high,
And wild on Rivelin writhed and toss'd
The stars and troubled sky,
Where lone the tree of ages grew,
With branches wide and tall ;
Ah ! who, when such a tempest blew,
Could hear his stormy fall ?
But now the skies, the stars are still,
The blue wave sleeps again,
And heath and moss, by rock and rill,
Are whispering, in disdain,
That Rivelin's side is desolate,
Her giant in the dust !
Beware, O Power ! for God is great,
O Guilt ! for God is just !

And boast not, Pride ! while millions pine,
That wealth secures thy home ;
The storm that shakes all hearths but thine
Is *not* the storm to come.
The tremour of the stars is pale,
The dead clod quakes with fear,
The worm slinks down o'er hill and vale,
When God in wrath draws near.
But if the Upas *will* not bend
Beneath the frown of Heaven,
A *whisper* cometh, which shall rend
What thunder hath not riven.

DRONE *v.* WORKER.

How God speeds the tax-bribed plough,
Fen and moor declare, man ; (e)
Where once fed the poor man's cow,
Acres drives his share, man.
But he did not *steal* the fen,
Did not *steal* the moor, man ;
If he feeds on starving men,
Still he loves the poor, man.
Hush ! he bullies, State and Throne,
Quids them in his jaw, man ;
Thine and mine he calls *his* own ;
Acres' lie is law, man.
Acres eats his tax on bread,
Acres loves the plough, man ;
Acres' dogs are better fed,
Beggar's slave ! than thou, man.
Acres' feeder pays his debts,
Waxes thin and pale, man,
Harder works, and poorer gets,
Pays his debts in jail, man.
Acres in a palace lives,
While his feeder pines, man ;
Palac'd beggar ne'er forgives
Dog on whom he dines, man.
Acres' feeder, beggar'd, begs,
Treadmill'd rogue is he, man ;
Scamp ! he deals in pheasants' eggs ;
Hangs on gallows-tree, man !
Who would be an useful man ?
Who sell cloth or hats, man ?
Who make boiler or mend pan ? (f)
Who keep Acres' brats, man ?
Better ride and represent ;
Better borough tools, man ;
Better sit in pauperment ;
Better Corn-Law fools, man.
Why not right the plunder'd poor ?
Why not use our *own*, man?
Plough the seas and *not* the moor ?
Why not pick a bone, man !
Lo ! the merchant builds huge mills ;
Bread-tax'd thinks and sighs, man !
Thousand mouths and bellies fills ;
Bread-tax'd breaks and dies, man !
Thousand mouths and bellies then,
Bread-tax'd, writhe and swear, man :
England once bred honest men—
Bread-tax'd, Burke and Hare, man !
Hark ye ! millions soon may pine,
Starving millions curse, man !
Desperate millions long to dine
A-la-Burke, and worse, man !
What will then remain to eat ?
Who be eaten then, man ?
"Few may part, though many meet,"
At Famine's Feast, ye ken, man.

SONG.

TUNE—"*Scots wha hae,*" *&c.*

Others march in freedom's van;
Canst not thou what others can?
Thou a Briton! thou a man!
What are worms, if human thou?

Wilt thou, deaf to hiss and groan,
Breed white slaves for every zone?
Make yon robber feed his own,
Then proclaim thyself a man.

Still shall paltry tyrants tell
Freemen when to buy and sell?
Spurn the coward thought to hell!
Tell the miscreants what they are.

Dost thou cringe, that fiends may scowl?
Wast thou born without a soul?
Spaniels *feed*, are whipp'd, and howl;
Spaniel! thou art *starved* and whipp'd.

Wilt thou still feed palaced knaves?
Shall thy sons be traitors' slaves?
Shall they sleep in workhouse graves?
Shall they toil for parish-pay?

Wherefore did'st thou woo and wed?
Why a bride was Mary led?
Shall she, dying, curse thy bed?
Tyrants! tyrants! no, by heaven!

SQUIRE LEECH.

Come, Lord Pauper! pay my bill
For radish-tops and fire;
Ploughman Joe, and Weaver Will,
Keep Robert Leech, Esquire.
You say, shares are fairly shared
Between the high and low;
While we starve, this joke runs hard
On bread-tax'd Will and Joe.

Leech drinks wine, sometimes enough,
But then he drinks in style:
Club-feast ale is sinful stuff;
And pewter-plate is vile.
Robert rides, and Robert drives—
His feeders barefoot go;
Will is clamming; bread-tax thrives;
And treadmills clamming Joe.

"Give," of old, the horse-leech cried;
Squire Robert cries, "Give, give!"
How the leeches are belied!
They suck, yet *cannot live*!
Little souls grow less and less,
And ever downward grow;
"Live and let live," they profess,
And feed on Will and Joe!

Bread-tax murders trade and hope;
Lord Pauper cries, "Well done!"
Bread-tax is not yet a rope
To every rascal's son;
Justice is not done, 'tis said
To Robert Leech and Co.;
Gibbet is not tax on bread—
But Bread-tax gibbets Joe!

HOW DIFFERENT!

Poor weaver, with the hopeless brow,
And bare wo-whiten'd head;
Thou art a pauper all allow,
All see thou begg'st thy bread;
And yet thou dost not plunder slaves,
Then tell them they are free;
Nor hast thou join'd with tax-fed knaves,
To Corn-Bill mine and me.

What borough dost thou represent?
Who bids't thou toil and pay?
Why sitt'st not thou in pauperment,
If baser beggars may?
Where are thy hounds, thy palaced w——e,
To feed on mine and me?
Thy reverend pimp, thy coach and four,
Thy thieves in livery?

No house hast thou, no food, no fire:
None bow to thee, alas!
A beggar? yet nor Lord, nor Squire!
Say, how comes this to pass?
While yon proud pauper, dead to shame,
Is fed by mine and me?
And yet behind the rascal's name
The scoundrel writes M. P.!

INSCRIPTION,

FOR A TABLET IN THE ISLAND OF JUAN FERNANDEZ.

Last of a race of giants, lived De Foe,
First champion of commercial liberty!
Where lie his bones? He died—'tis all we know,
Save that he lived and died in penury;
And, sorrowing, paid to unrelenting hate
That debt which envy ne'er forgives the great.
Hampden! De Foe! Cromwell! and Milton! When
Shall twenty years boast four such names again?—
But which was greatest? Great was he who fell—
The rebel Hampden; great and terrible
He who well merited the crown he dared;
Mighty the novelist; sublime the bard,
That blind old man of London! With their deeds
The world still rings as age to age succeeds;
But which will longest bask in glory's smile?
The tale of Paradise—or that of Crusoe's isle?

ROGUES *v.* REASON.

Your cause is thrash'd—'tis time! forgive
The husk that casts ye out;
And with your horrid bread-tax live,
Or try to live without.

"What! eat our own?" Poor rogues! not so—
Your own is gone and spent:
Shall orphan Jane, and Dupe and Co.,
Repay you what they lent?

"Yes, and the poor man then may keep
A keg of home-brew'd beer:"
Towards which end let toil be cheap,
And hops and barley dear.

"Transfer to us the malt-tax then;
Hark, forward! Tally-ho!"
Both tax and price, kind gentlemen?
"Both, both, sir! on we go."

Let price and tax to you be paid,
If ruin'd trade can pay;
"Pay? What care we for ruin'd trade?
Hark, forward! hark, away!"

Too fast, perhaps. "Transfer! transfer!
Tax commerce! we must eat:"
And, having earth'd your customer,
To Poland send your wheat?

"Pshaw! doubly-tax wheat, hemp, and flax!
Tax wool!" (g) and keep it too.
Lord help you, try a parson-tax,
Your labour-tax wont do.

THE MIRACULOUS GOOSE.

Ho! all who laud the Stamford Ass,
Lend me your ears, I pray!
On C————r's wave a goose there was,
That, cackling, seem'd to bray.
Some say she was a noble bird;
But in good print we find,
That ever when her voice was heard
It gave sight to the blind!
Loud sounding, like Old Sarum's knell,
It startled Newark's mead;
And folks, who had not learn'd to spell,
Were taught, at once, to read!
E'en sundry Squires, and men of might,
All true John Bulls, I ween,
Became acquainted with the light,
Though they stone-blind had been.
For when they turned their backs on trade,
And would true Squires be thought,
By paper-prices undismay'd,
Their bread-tax'd lands they bought.
But when they heard—and they had ears—
The goose of C————r bray,
Their eyes were opened, and, in tears,
They saw the light of day.
But when they saw that they could see,
They saw that they were trick'd;
And when they thought of morgagee,
They stared like donkeys stick'd;
For all their foes did on them burst,
Like dogs at bear let loose,
And mortgagee, of all, the worst,
Had also heard the goose!
Then too their farmers wroth did wax,
And they wax'd witty too,
Advising much a turnip-tax,
Since bread-tax would not do.
The Squires, who gibes regarded not,
Were inly troubled sore,
And marvelled that they never thought
Of turnip-tax before.
"A turnip-tax," with sudden glee,
"A turnip-tax," they cried,
And C————r's goose, and mortgagee,
"A turnip-tax," replied.
So let us sing God save the King,
And C————r's goose God save,
And when she next consents to sing,
May Sadler hear a stave!

THE JACOBIN'S PRAYER.

Avenge the plunder'd poor, O Lord!
But not with fire, but not with sword;
Not as at Peterloo they died,
Beneath the hoofs of coward pride;
Avenge our rags, our chains, our sighs,
The famine in our children's eyes!
But not with sword—no, not with fire
Chastise thou Britain's locustry!
Lord, let them feel thy heavier ire;
Whip them, O Lord! with poverty!
Then cold in soul as coffin'd dust,
Their hearts as tearless, dead, and dry,
Let them in outrag'd mercy trust,
And *find* that mercy they deny!

Yon cotton-prince, at Peterloo,
Found easy work, and glory too:
"Corn-Laws," quoth he, "make labour cheap,
And famine from our trenchers keep."
He sees but wealth in want and wo;
Men starve, he owns, and justly so;
But if they marry and get brats,
Must *he* provide their shirts and hats?
Lord, fill his leger with bad debts
Let him be learned in gazettes!
A beadle's son, a lawyer's sire,
And born the favourite of a Squire,
Strut hath town acres three or four,
Two taverns, and can license more:
That street is his, blue Jobber's Row:
He feels no want, he sees no wo;
But, having jobb'd another groat,
Pays Corn-Law twopence, as he ought,
And still is purchas'd *with his own*,
Although his god is half-a-crown.
Talk not to *him* of wants and woes;
He hates the fool who names his foes.
Lord, let his hollow rental fail,
And lice instruct him in a jail!

Yon prigling, territorial grown,
Sublimely takes his Satrap-stride
On two vast acres, call'd his own,
And almost bursts with upstart pride.
"Cheap corn is ruin," he can shew;
"Let rents be raised, sir!" are they low?
"They are—despite your Liberal cant,
And all the pack of growling hounds:
The poor, sir, are extravagant:
These eight roods cost five hundred pounds!"
He earns with ease his daily bread;
But want still quits his door unfed.
Let thrice five sons and daughters, Lord,
Surround this childless husband's board,
Till wisdom from his trencher preach,
And back and belly learn and teach.

Yon yeoman used, in better days,
When "D—n the French" was pray'r and praise,
To teach us thrice a year or so,
From Tory-rule what blessings flow;
He back'd his war-horse through the panes
Of quiet people who had brains;
And when pale freedom's champions fell,
He three-times-three'd his carnage yell,
Till awe-struck fiends turn'd pale in hell.
For wool-tax now, and parish pay,
He prays in curses every day,
And bans the Liberals and the peace.
Lord, let him take his farm on lease!
That he may feel the growing pain,
Which they endure who toil in vain;
The sinking soul, the dark distress,
The sting of this world's hopelessness;
Till down his cheek of lemon-peel,
A selfish tear, at least, may steal,

And wondering sceptics gladly own
His heart is human, though of bone!

See, how yon Thane of Corn-Laws scowls,
Picking our pockets, while he growls!
Lord, shall his law, untaxing rent,
Become his order's monument?
A beacon, bidding future times
Avoid his fate, abhor his crimes?
When Ruin yells, and Havock goads,
And, long-prepared, his mine explodes,
O may the wretch outlive the shock
Of shaken earth, and shatter'd rock!
Whip him, O Lord, with want and wo!
Lord, teach him what his victims know! (h)
And when, with toil and trouble worn,
He sits beneath a blasted thorn,
Let him behold, with grief and ire,
While sinks the sun in pomp of fire,
The palace of his patriot sire,
Who *fed* the poor, that feed the proud,
And plunder'd *not* the toiling crowd!
But if, when chastening years are past,
His sorrows try to smile at last,
And in his plot of garden ground
The wire-edged cottage flower be found,
Or rose, or pink, whose glowing rays
Remind him of departed days,
Let no mean worm's despotic power
Envy that fallen man his flower!
O let no little tyrant dare
To rend the hope of his despair,
The solace of his closing day,
His *friend*—his garden-plot—away!
Nor upstart pride, with scornful tone,
The poor man's claim to taste disown,
And turn affronted tears to stone!

SONG.

When Freedom's foes mock'd Labour's groan,
And, drunk with power, contemn'd the throne,
God bade great William rule the waves,
And William scorn'd to govern slaves.
Rule, great William, rule the free!
William Britain's shield will be!

On their hard hearts they ground their words,
And made them sharp as traitor's swords,
But cower'd, like dogs, beneath his eye,
When millions shouted, to the sky,
Rule, great Willlam, rule the free!
William Freedom's shield shall be!

He broke his bonds o'er Rapine's head;
"Free men! Free bread!" great William said,
And like a second Alfred stood,
King of the happy and the good;
While the free, from sea to sea,
Sang, Great William rules the free!

SONG

Who came when hope had fled?
Who will untax our bread?
Who save the State?
Who storm the robber's den?
Sole theme of tongue and pen,
William, the King of Men,
William the Great!

Hark, how his people sing,
God save our patriot King,
God save the State!
Long may he rule the brave,
Smiling at fool and knave,
Ere truth inscribe his grave—
"William the Great!"

CREED O' THE CANNY.

No printing! the printers are devils,
Whose lore teaches slaves to be free:
Long life to all orthodox evils,
Our watchword and motto shall be.

The dust of Old Sarum is holy,
In our hearts live her ramparts and towers;
No progress! improvement is folly;
The foes of green Gatton are ours.

To the dogs with the poor and the needy!
Rogues and vagabonds! what can they pay?
Does the tree of our planting grow seedy?
Up, yeoman, and hatchet away!

No freedom! the French are all pagan;
Make a torch of their tallow and blood!
Then fire their new temple of Dagon,
But quench every spark where it stood.

No Flemish republic to plague us;
No Poland to bother our sons;
Success to thee, Lamb of the Tagus!
Success to thee, King of the Huns!

Watch well, thou black eagle of Prussia!
Sarmatia claims one of thy wings:
Purvey for the dragon of Russia;
Be base for the honour of kings.

Our god is the Great God of Slaughter;
The hope of our purse is the sword:
Hosanna to Carnage, God's daughter!
Hosanna to Massacre's Lord!

JUDAS.

While retribution o'er thee hangs,
Tory, thou com'st—but hid'st thy fangs—
To aid with hollow, base harangues,
The hated cause of Liberty!

But never more pale Freedom's rout,
Slaves, Peterloo'd, with shriek and shout,
Or whipp'd till drop their bowels out,
Shalt thou behold in ecstasy!

Thy proper glories all are gone;
"Revered and ruptured Ogden's" none,
With dungeon groans, shall urge thee on,
Henceforth, to new atrocities!

Of Freedom's champions now are thine
No shipments o'er the burning line;
O'er trampled rights no yell divine;
No hangings, burnings, massacres!

Thy scourge is dry, but stiff with blood;
It drinks no more, though fain it would;
No gibbet waits the wise and good;
Thy prison-ship is victimless!

Australia o'er the deep complains
That patriots come not now in chains
To tell, amid her woods and plains,
The tale of British liberty.

Then, praise be thine, Iscariot's son,
Who, when our fight was fought and won,
With water in a sieve didst run,
To cheer the victor veteran!

But let the patriot's memory rot!
The sufferer's woes are best forgot:
With Gerald, Muir, and Margarot,
(Insulted miscreant!) bury them.

EPITAPH ON THOMAS MUIR.

Thy earth, Chantilly, boasts the grave of Muir,
The wise, the lov'd, the murder'd, and the pure!
While in his native land the murderers sleep,
Where marble forms, in mockery, o'er them weep—
His sad memorials telling future times
How Scotchmen honour worth and gibbet crimes.

REFORM.

Too long endured, a power and will,
That would be nought, or first in ill,
Had wasted wealth, and palsied skill,
And fed on toil-worn poverty.

They call'd the poor a rope of sand;
And, lo! no rich man's voice or hand
Was raised, throughout the suffering land,
Against their long iniquity.

They taught the self-robb'd sons of pride
To turn from toil and want aside,
And coin their hearts, guilt-petrified,
To buy a smile from infamy.

The philter'd lion yawn'd in vain,
While o'er his eyes, and o'er his mane,
They hung a picklock, mask, and chain—
True emblems of his dignity.

They murder'd Hope, they fetter'd Trade;
The clouds to blood, the sun to shade,
And every good that God had made
They turn'd to bane and mockery.

Love, plant of Heaven, and sent to shew
One bliss divine to earth below,
Changed by their frown, bore crime and wo,
And breathed, for fragrance, pestilence.

With Freedom's plume, and Honour's gem,
They deck'd Abaddon's diadem,
And call'd on hell to shout for them,
The holiest name of holiness.

They knew no interest but their own;
They shook the State, they shook the Throne,
They shook the world; and God alone
Seem'd safe in his omnipotence.

Did then his thunder rend the skies,
To bid the dead in soul arise?—
The dreadful glare of sullen eyes
Alone warn'd cruel tyranny!

A murmur from a trampled worm,
A whisper in the cloudless storm—
Yet these, even these, announced Reform;
And Famine's scowl was prophecy!

Nor then remorse, nor tardy shame,
Nor love of praise, nor dread of blame,
But tongues of fire, and words of flame,
Rous'd Mammon from his apathy.

At length, a MAN to Mercia spoke! *
From smitten hearts the lightning broke;
The slow invincible awoke;
And England's frown was victory!

No thanks to thee, thou self-robb'd slave!
And none to thee, thou Tory knave!
But all to them, the few and brave,
Whose watchword still was "Liberty!"

O years of crime! The great and true—
The nobly wise—are still the few,
Who bid Truth grow where Falsehood grew,
And plant it for eternity!

SONG.

When working blackguards come to blows,
And give or take a bloody nose,
Shall juries try such dogs as those,
Now Nap lies at Saint Helena?

No—let the Great Unpaid decide,
Without appeal, on tame bull's hide,
Ash-planted well, or fistified,
Since Nap died at Saint Helena.

When Sabbath stills the dizzy mill,
Shall Cutler Tom, or Grinder Bill,
On footpaths wander where they will,
Now Nap lies at Saint Helena?

No—let them curse, but *feel* our power;
Dogs! let them spend their idle hour
Where burns the highway's dusty shower;
For Nap died at Saint Helena.

Huzza! the rascal Whiglings work
For better men than Hare and Burke,
And envy Algerine and Turk,
Since Nap died at Saint Helena.

Then close each path that sweetly climbs
Suburban hills, where village chimes
Remind the rogues of other times,
Ere Nap died at Saint Helena.

We tax their bread, restrict their trade;
To toil for us, their hands were made;
Their doom is seal'd, their prayer is pray'd;
Nap perish'd at Saint Helena.

Dogs! would they toil and fatten too?
They grumble still, as dogs will do;
We conquer'd *them* at Waterloo;
And Nap lies at Saint Helena.

But shall the villains meet and prate,
In crowds, about affairs of State?
Ride, yeoman, ride! act, magistrate!
Nap perish'd at Saint Helena.

---

* Henry Brougham.

ARTHUR BREADTAX-WINNER.

Who is prais'd by dolt and sinner?
  Who serves masters more than one?
Blucherloo, the breadtax-winner;
  Breadtax-winning Famineton.

Blucherloo, the breadtax-winner!
  Whom enrich'd thy battles won?
Whom Does Dirt-grub ask to dinner?—
  Breadtax-winning Famineton.

Whom feeds Arthur Breadtax-winner?—
  All our rivals, sire and son,
Foreign cutler, foreign spinner,
  Bless their patron, Famineton.

Prussia fattens—we get thinner!
  Breadtax barters all for none:
Bravo! Arthur Breadtax-winner!
  Shallow half-brain'd Famineton!

Empty thinks the devil's in her:
  Take will grin, when *Make* is gone!
Bread-tax teaches saint and sinner,
  Grinning flint-fac'd Famineton!

LINES

WRITTEN IN AN EDITION OF COLLINS, WITH ETCHINGS BY PLATT.

Struck blind in youth, Platt ask'd the proud for bread;
He ask'd in vain, and sternly join'd the dead.
I saw him weep—"Hail, holy light!" he cried;
But living darkness heard him, and he died.
Oh, by the light that left too soon his eyes,
And bade him starve on ice-cold charities;
Doom'd is the wealth that could no pittance spare,
To save benighted genius from despair!
These etchings, Platt, alone remain of thee!
How soon, alas! e'en these will cease to be!
But poesy hath flowers that ever bloom;
And music, though she seal'd thy cruel doom,*
Shall sing a ballad o'er her pupils' tomb.

DEATH AND CO.

O Huskisson! too meek of soul,
  Thou took'st thy station with the dead,
To compliment the "Mousing Owl,"
  Whose triumph tax'd thy country's bread.
Death smote thee down, as now he smites
  His foodless thousands, all in vain;
While Rapine, over trampled rights,
  Beneath his shadow, yells amain;—
"Strike! Death, these dogs are thine and mine!
  To famish them, I worship thee;
One murderous cry is mine and thine—
  One murderous aim—Monopoly!"

* The unfortunate artist, having lost his sight, attempted to learn music for subsistence. A concert, which he advertised, failed, and the cup ran over.

LINES

ON THE ELEVEN POOR MEN OF HALLAMSHIRE, WHO ORIGINATED THE SHEFFIELD POLITICAL UNION.

Come, drink to the four and the seven,
  Who first bade their brethren combine;
Hurra, for the glorious eleven!—
  Though their doublets are not very fine.
"Combine, for the wicked conspire!
  "Combine!" said the four and the seven;
And Hallam's old eyes darted fire
  At the words of the dreadless eleven.
And what are the four and the seven,
  Whose doublets are not very fine?
And what are the glorious eleven,
  Who first bade the plunder'd combine?—
All useful, all modest, all brave;
  All British through marrow and bone:
There is not among them a slave
  Gold-rusted, gold-rotten—not one!
Not one of them all fears the laugh,
  Of Booby, the grandson of Bear;
Or Bleatwell, the third gilded calf
  Of footman's son Golden Horn's heir;
Or Surface, quite easy to paint;
  Or Struttle, whose dignity crawls;
Or solemn Select, the queer saint
  Who would not know Christ at Saint Paul's.
Then drink to the four and the seven!—
  Though their doublets are not very fine;—
The modest and manly eleven,
  Who first bade the plunder'd combine.
"Combine!" said the four and the seven,
  "Combine, for the wicked conspire!"
So spoke the immortal eleven,
  While the eyes of old Hallam flashed fire.

HYMN

WRITTEN FOR THE SHEFFIELD POLITICAL UNION.

TUNE—"*Scots wha' ha'.*"

Hands, and hearts, and *minds* are ours;
Shall we bow to bestial powers?
Tyrants, vaunt your swords and towers!
  Reason is our citadel.

With what arms will ye surprise
Knowledge, of the million eyes?
What is mightier than the wise?
  Not the might of wickedness.

Trust in force!—So tyrants trust!
Words shall crush ye into dust;
Yet we *fight*, if fight we must—
  Thou didst, Man of Huntingdon!*

Records name a wretch abhorr'd,
Who, when Stuart claim'd his sword,
Fled the land, and left his lord:
  Blustering Pelham! who was he?

Or will Vane, the pauper, say
Who, in Stuart's evil day,
Baffled, vanquish'd, swept away,
  Rebel-king, and foreign slave?

* One Oliver Cromwell, a brewer.

What were they who prostrate laid
Far-fam'd hosts, whom despots bade
Gaul's enfranchis'd soil invade ?
Answer, proudest history !

Heirs of Pym ! can ye be base ?
Locke ! shall Frenchmen scorn a race
Born in Hampden's dwelling place ?
Blush to write it, Infamy !

What we are our fathers were ;
What they dar'd, their sons can dare ;
Vulgar tyrants ! hush ! beware !
Bring not down the avalanche.

By the death which Hampden died !
By oppression, mind-defied !
Despots, we will tame your pride—
Stormily or tranquilly !

SONG.

Who won Blucher's Waterloo ?
Britons fought and won it, too—
Or, if doubtful tales be true,
Breadtax-winning Wellington !

Sons and brethren brave remain
Of the men of Mont Saint Jean,
Nobler conflicts to maintain,
Arthur's master, Nicholas !

Warriors of the well-filled chest,
Empty purse will teach ye best :
Do your worst—we'll do the rest ;
Thieves, ho ! lock the treasury.

EPITAPH.

Died he of want, who bade the power of steam
Urge Britain's commerce o'er the conquer'd stream ?
Ye tax-fed worldlings ! may the name of Bell
Weigh heavy on your pigmy souls in hell !

BATTLE SONG.

Day, like our souls, is fiercely dark ;
What then ? 'Tis day !
We sleep no more ; the cock crows—hark !
To arms ! away !
They come ! they come ! the knell is rung
Of us or them ;
Wide o'er their march the pomp is flung
Of gold and gem.
What collar'd hound of lawless sway,
To famine dear—
What pension'd slave of Attila,
Leads in the rear ?
Come they from Scythian wilds afar,
Our blood to spill ?
Wear they the livery of Czar ?
They do his will.
Nor tassell'd silk, nor epaulette,
Nor plume, nor torse—
No splendour gilds, all sternly met,
Our foot and horse.
But, dark and still, we inly glow,
Condens'd in ire !
Strike tawdry slaves, and ye shall know
Our gloom is fire.

In vain your pomp, ye evil powers,
Insults the land ;
Wrongs, vengeance, and *the cause* are ours,
And God's right hand !
Madmen ! they trample into snakes
The wormy clod !
Like fire, beneath their feet awakes
The sword of God !
Behind, before, above, below,
They rouse the brave ;
Where'er they go, they make a foe,
Or find a grave.

THE REVOLUTION OF 1832.

See, the slow Angel writhes in dreams of pain !
His cheek indignant glows !
Like Stanedge, shaking thunder from his mane,
He starts from his repose.
Wide, wide, his earthquake-voice is felt and heard ;
"Arise, ye brave and just !"
The living sea is to its centre stirr'd—
And, lo ! our foes are dust !
The earth beneath the feet of millions quakes ;
The whirlwind-cloud is riv'n ;
As midnight, smitten into lightning, wakes,
So wak'd the sword of Heav'n.
The angel drew not from its sheath that sword ;
He spake, and all was done !
Night fled away before the Almighty word,
And, lo !—the sun ! the sun !

THE TRIUMPH OF REFORM.

WRITTEN FOR THE SHEFFIELD POLITICAL UNION.

TUNE.—"*Rule Britannia.*"

When wo-worn France first sternly spread
Her banner'd rainbow on the wind ;
To smite rebellious Reason dead,
The kings of many lands combined.
Did they triumph ? So they deem'd :
Could they triumph ? No !—They dream'd.

From Freedom's ashes at their call
A form of might arose, and blaz'd :
'Tis true they saw the phantom fall ;
'Tis true they crush'd the power they rais'd ;
But in conflict with the wise,
Vain are armies, leagues, and lies.

Not Freedom—no ! but Freedom's foe,
The baffled league of king's o'erthrew ;
We conquer'd *them*, though slaves can shew
They conquer'd *us* at Waterloo :
Mind is mightier than the strong !
Right hath triumph'd over wrong !

By sordid lusts to ruin led,
Come England's foes, ye self-undone !
Behold for *what* ye tax'd our bread !
Is this the *Mont Saint Jean* ye won ?
Hark the *rabble's* triumph lay !—
Sturdy beggars ! who are they ?

Go, call your Czar ! hire all his hordes !
Arm Cæsar Hardinge ! League and plot !
Mind smites you with her wing of words,
And nought shall be, where mind is not.
Crush'd to nothing—what you are—
Wormlings ! will ye prate of war ?

No paltry fray, no bloody day,
That crowns with praise, the baby-great;
The Deed of Brougham, Russell, Grey,
The Deed that's *done*, we celebrate!
Mind's great Charter! Europe sav'd!
Man *for ever* unenslav'd!

O could the wise, the brave, the just,
Who suffer'd—died—to break our chains;
Could Muir, could Palmer, from the dust,
Could murder'd Gerald hear our strains;
Then would martyrs, thron'd in bliss,
See all ages bless'd in this.

THE PRESS.

WRITTEN FOR THE PRINTERS OF SHEFFIELD, ON THE PASSING OF THE REFORM BILL.

God said—"Let there be light!"
Grim darkness felt his might,
And fled away;
Then startled seas and mountains cold
Shone forth, all bright in blue and gold,
And cried—"'Tis day! 'tis day!"
"Hail, holy light!" exclaim'd
The thund'rous cloud, that flam'd
O'er daisies white;
And, lo! the rose, in crimson dress'd,
Lean'd sweetly on the lily's breast;
And, blushing, murmur'd—"Light!"
Then was the skylark born;
Then rose th' embattl'd corn;
Then floods of praise
Flow'd o'er the sunny hills of noon;
And then, in stillest night, the moon
Pour'd forth her pensive lays.
Lo, heaven's bright bow is glad!
Lo, trees and flowers all clad
In glory, bloom!
And shall the mortal sons of God
Be senseless as the trodden clod,
And darker than the tomb?
No, by the *mind* of man!
By the swart artisan!
By God, our Sire!
Our souls have holy light within,
And every form of grief and sin
Shall see and feel its fire.
By earth, and hell, and heav'n,
The shroud of souls is riven!
Mind, mind alone
Is light, and hope, and life, and power!
Earth's deepest night, from this bless'd hour,
The night of minds is gone!
"The Press!" all lands shall sing;
The Press, the Press we bring,
All lands to bless:
O pallid Want! O Labour stark!
Behold, we bring the second ark!
The Press! the Press! the Press!

THE EMIGRANT'S FAREWELL.

England, farewell! we quit thee—never more
To drink thy dewy light, or hear the thrush
Sing to thy fountain'd vales. Farewell! thy shore
Sinks—it is gone! and in our souls the rush
Of billows soundeth, like the crash and crush
Of hope and life. No land! all sky and sea!
For ever then farewell! But may we blush
To hear thy language, if thy wrongs or thee
Our hearts forget, where screams o'er rock and tree
The Washingtonian eagle! In our prayers,
If we forget our wrongers, may we be
Vile as their virtues, hopeless as their heirs,
And sires of sons whom scorn shall nickname their's!—
And to such wolves leave we our country? Oh.
The heart that quits thee, e'en in hope, despairs!
Yet from our father's graves thy children go
To houseless wilds, where nameless rivers flow,
Lest, when our children pass *our* graves, they hear
The clank of chains, and shrieks of servile wo
From coward bones, that, e'en though lifeless, fear
Cold Rapine's icy fang, cold Havock's dastard spear.

SONG.

Here's a health to our friends of Reform!
And, hey, for the town of the cloud,
That gather'd her brows, like the frown of the storm,
And scatter'd the base and the proud.

Drink, first, to that friend of the right,
That champion of freedom and man,
Our heart-broken Milton, who, roused to the fight,
Again took his place in the van.

Then, to Palfreyman, Parker, and Ward,
And Bailey, a star at mid-day;
And Badger, the lawyer, and Brettel, the bard,
And Phillips in battle grown gray.

And Bramhall, by bigots unhung;
And Holland, the fearless and pure;
And Bramley, and Barker, the wise and the young;
And Bently, the Rotherham brewer.

And Knight, whom the poor know and love,
For he does not scorn to know them;
And Dixon, whom conscience and prudence approve;
And Smith, though unpolish'd, a gem.

Here's a health to our friend's of Reform!
The champions of freedom and man,
Our pilots who weather'd and scatter'd the storm,
Our heroes who fought in the van.

And, since Russell's bolus is driv'n
Down the throats of Cant, Plunder, and Co.,
May the firm of the Maggots take wing to that heav'n
Whither all the Saint Castlereaghs go!

Or while, with the Bat and the Owl,
For darkness invaded they grieve,
May their angels take each Tory body or soul
Which the devil would blush to receive!

A POET'S PRAYER.

Almighty Father! let thy lowly child,
Strong in his love of truth, be wisely bold—
A patriot bard, by sycophants revil'd,
Let him live usefully, and not die old!
Let poor men's children, pleas'd to read his lays,
Love, for his sake, the scenes where he hath been
And, when he ends his pilgrimage of days,
Let him be buried where the grass is green;

Where daisies, blooming earliest, linger late
To hear the bee his busy note prolong—
There let him slumber, and in peace await
The dawning morn, far from the sensual throng,
Who scorn the windflower's blush, the redbreast's
lonely song.

NOTES

TO THE CORN-LAW RHYMES.

([a]) *Hopeless trader! answer me,*
What hath Bread-tax done for thee?

Why does not the country shopkeeper oppose the Corn-Law?—Because he supposes that he recovers from the farmers what the bread-tax costs him. He is mistaken; for *if* the farmers buy his goods, they pay for them *with his own money*, wrung from him, and *from his other customers*, in the price of bread.

Why do not the master manufacturers oppose the Corn-Law?—Because they suppose that they can extort from their workmen, in lowered wages, what the bread-tax takes from their profits. Well, if they cannot find patriotism in their cold hearts, they will find it in due time at the bottom of an empty pocket.

Why do not our merchants oppose the Corn-Law; the effect of which is, to reduce the rate of profit on *all* British capital, skill, and labour?—Alas, we have no merchants! The Corn-Law has transformed them into a sort of pedlars, or shabby brokers. When a foreigner inquires for an English merchant, he is shewn some fifty-pound upstart, dressed like a dandy, but poorer than a Polish Jew, who, with the looks of a wolf, the cunning of a cat, and the airs of a bashaw, plays three characters at once—thief, half-beggar, and satrap.

Why do not the fundholders, to a man, oppose the Corn-Law?—I know not—but their property will be the very next great lump which the bread-tax eaters will swallow.

Why does not the Church oppose the Corn-Law?—She can gain nothing by it, for her lands are all underlet; and certainly the landlords, when they have digested the fundholders, will eat her too.

Why do not the farmers oppose the Corn-Law?—Because they conceive that they derive an advantage from it, in the price of corn. They are mistaken. The competition for farms, of which it is the cause, will ruin every man of them. Unhappily, the landlords will be the last devoured—but then, they will have the satisfaction of being eaten raw and alive.

Every man who dreads dangerous turn-outs of workmen, should oppose the Corn-Law, for it is the great cause of such turn-outs; and before he blame the workmen, he should compare their conduct with that of the landlords. The workmen try to get higher wages, generally, by legal means; the landlords *make a law*, by which they obtain their unfair price.

Every friend of agricultural improvement should oppose the Corn-Law; for, so long as the agriculturists can secure a forced price, they will make no efforts to improve their art.

Every man who would not welcome revolution, should oppose the Corn-Law, or it will revolutionize the kingdom.

Every advocate of reform should oppose the Corn-Law; for it is the tax-shield of his enemies; deprive them of that shield, and they must become reformers themselves.

Whoever does not oppose the Corn-Law, is a patron of want, national immorality, bankruptcy, child-murder, incendiary fires, midnight assassination, and anarchy. Therefore, every supposed moral or religious man—every schoolmaster—every teacher of religion especially—should oppose the Corn-Law: or he cannot possibly be either moral or religious, and the devil would be more fit to be a teacher than he.

Why the little landed proprietors near large towns do not oppose the Corn-Law, I never could imagine; for their land is *commercial* land; and the tenant who pays one shilling per week more than he ought for bread, would be able to pay fifty-two shillings per annum more rent, if he could obtain his bread at a fair price. But the Corn-Law ought to be supported by every wretch who would grieve to see this country carry her burden as if it were only a rain-drop on the eagle's wing; by every miscreant who would rejoice to see our mechanics labouring fifteen hours for eightpence, and eating potatoes at thirty-pence per stone; while capital was quitting the island in all directions, never to return, except in a hostile shape. Every man-devil who loves evil for its own sake, and says to the demon within him, "Be thou my good," ought to support the Corn-Law; for the consequences of that law are of an infernal nature, unaccompanied by good in any way. While it exists, no reduction of taxation—no, not the extinction of all other taxes could be of any ultimate benefit to the people; for the Corn-Law would either destroy a sum equal in amount to the taxes repealed, or transfer that amount to the landlords, in raised rents. It was intended by its authors to transfer the wealth of the nation to themselves; but it destroys far more than it transfers, as they will yet find to their cost. It compels us to exchange our skill and labour for the produce of barren soils, and makes such soils the measure of our profits; reducing, as it were, the capabilities of fertile and mighty England, by the scale of barren and feeble Sweden. How fast soever the competitors for bread may increase in number, no increase is allowed in the bread for which they compete; consequently, we must every day give more and more capital, skill, and labour, for less and less food; the clerk who last year received a salary of £100, will be grudgingly paid £80 next year; and the shopkeeper, whose profits are £150, must be satisfied with two-thirds of that sum one year hence. In comfort, morals, science, we are inferior to our rivals; our manhood is more feeble than their infancy. The political machine will soon want power to overcome even its own friction; and, deprived alike of individual prosperity and national strength, we shall become the prey of anarchy, and fall before the first invader. If the winds, and the tides, and the earth in her annual and diurnal motion, were arrested, who dares contemplate the result? Yet the Corn-Law is arresting the winds and the tides; unteaching the uses of navigation as if there had never been a Christopher Colon; and *literally* compelling the stars in their courses to fight against England. Her old age and decrepitude—an old age without dignity, and a decrepitude without commiseration—are anticipated, a thousand years before their time, by act of Parliament. Hear, O Czar! and knout already, in imagination, thy province of Thule!

([b]) *Make haste, slow rogues! prohibit trade.*

The *Westminster Review* has removed all mystery, from the subject of the Corn-Law. But it cannot be made too plain. Let us compare bread-taxed England with a ship, the crew of which, consisting of men, women, and children, eat lettuce grown on the deck of the vessel. Let us suppose that no more lettuce can be grown on the deck than is barely sufficient to feed the present crew. Let us then suppose that another child is born, the mother of which addresses the captain in these words:—"Sir, the people on the opposite shore grow lettuce, and eat fish which we cannot eat. Let me exchange with them—fish for lettuce; and the crew will no longer regard my child with black looks." "I will take your fish," cries the captain. "Sir," answers the mother, "I know you will *take* my fish, but you will not give me any more lettuce than before, for you

have no more to give; you *can* have no more; you can grow no more on these decks." "You be d——d! Throw her overboard," roars the captain. Now, this throwing overboard, will be the very next thing proposed, namely, an emigration-tax, or law compelling the British people to breed white slaves for exportation. If it pass, it will furnish to all future ages a true picture of the miscreancy of these realms; for the effect will be precisely that which would have taken place in the Black Hole of Calcutta, had the tyrant who confined our countrymen in that dungeon, released a few of them from time to time, merely to prolong the sufferings of the remainder.

When our unfortunate countrymen were confined in the Black Hole of Calcutta, they complained of intense thirst, and the prison resounded with cries of "Water, water." Water was given them, but it increased their sufferings; for the thing wanted was not water, but air. Behold an exact picture of bread-taxed England! We are suffering under the effects of *caged* competition, already wrought up to agony. Some of the victims demand "one-pound notes!" others require "ten-shilling guineas!" and others—the incurably mad, propose that more bolts shall be placed on the prison door. But the thing wanted is "bread," in exchange for cottons, woollens, and hardware; and no other thing can supply the want of that one thing, any more than water could supply the want of air in the Black Hole of Calcutta.

(c) *A helmless wreck, a famine-frantic crew.*

Good sometimes results from evil. The French restrictive system, the fatal legacy of Napoleon to the Bourbons, who only knew how to imitate his faults, has given freedom to Europe. In one instance, it beggared three millions of vine growers, merely to force the prosperity of 212 ironmasters, who, nevertheless, are ruined to a man. When the King set the nation at defiance, the manufacturers were glad of a pretence for discharging their profitless men, and the unemployed artisans of Paris overthrew the government.

If that mathematical education which is taught at one of our universities be worth what we are told it is, the clergy could not better employ their leisure than in seeking data on which to calculate in how many years or months the Corn-Law will revolutionize this country. The following letter on the subject appeared in the *Sheffield Independent* of the 25th of September, 1830:—

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE SHEFFIELD INDEPENDENT.

"SIR,—I learn, from the *Independent* of Saturday last, that at Hull alone, there have lately been entered from bond, for home consumption, 98,000 quarters of wheat. It is well known, that about eighteen-twentieths of the corn imported into England are sold for the account of foreign merchants; but it is known to too few, that by eighteen-twentieths of the above 98,000 quarters of wheat—supposing it to have been sold at 70s. per quarter—the British public sustain a loss of £82,470—namely, 17s. per quarter actually *given* to the foreign merchant or grower; besides 1s. per quarter duty paid into the British exchequer; and that the above loss of £82,470, on eighteen-twentieths of 98,000 quarters of foreign wheat, sold to the British consumer at 70s. per quarter, is a loss utterly unredeemed in any way—benefiting neither man, woman, nor child in this country, of whatever rank or condition, whether palaced pauper, honest pauper, or unfortunate feeder of both, but as completely lost, as if the money had been thrown into the sea. I will endeavour to demonstrate these facts:—

"It is in evidence that the remunerating price of foreign wheat at Hull is about 50s. per quarter, and that 2s. per quarter more will allow the foreign merchant a handsome profit. Now, if the people of England were allowed to purchase foreign corn without duty or restriction, they would buy it when cheapest. But as 17 multiplied by 4 is only 68, it follows that the foreign merchant or grower, by determining not to sell until the price in England is 70s. per quarter, can afford to loose one cargo in four; and I think it follows, that rather than sell at the high duties he will suffer his corn to rot in our warehouses. Let us state a case. We will suppose that Shultz of Hamburgh consigns to Wreaks of Hull, 1000 quarters of wheat for sale, when the duty in this country shall be 1s. per quarter. The agent obeys, and, after deducting his expenses, and 10s. per cent. commission, remits the balance to his employer. The results will be as follow: The British public will lose by the 1000 quarters of wheat £855, for they will have given £3,500 for goods which are only worth £2,645! £50 duty will have been paid to our Government—and the Hull merchant will have gained £4 : 5 : 6 commission.—So much for profit and loss.

'These are your wondrous deeds, kinglings of Gatton!
Yourselves how wondrous then!'

"Behold, and, if you can, blush!—But if we must be cursed with the most impolitic of all taxes, a bread tax—why not at once impose a fixed duty on foreign corn, importable at all times; a duty, no part of which would go into the pockets of foreign merchants or growers, but the whole into our own treasury, at the same time preventing, or misplacing some other tax to an equal amount?

"The loss proved above on the transactions supposed is about 34 per cent.; but such losses are the very least of the evils inflicted on the people of this country by the Corn-Laws. Let it be remembered, however, that all which is destroyed by those laws increases the cost of production here, and is consequently a premium paid by us to our rivals. But the most deadly power armed against us by the Corn-Laws, is that which a merchant might call *the reaction of discount;* I mean the result of substracting a sum which has a certain tendency to increase, from a sum which is constantly decreasing. If the 34 per cent. loss were suffered to remain as capital in the hands of the British people, there would be in twelve months a profit of at least 10 per cent. upon it; and if £5 are ten per cent. upon £50, I need not tell you that they are more than ten per cent. upon £40. But what is the per centage of reaction of discount upon ten per cent. added to thirty-four per cent.? Let your loyal ass, Mr Editor, discount the remaining £56 of the hundred, and be instructed. Yes, it is this deadly power, this reaction of discount, this constant substraction of the increasing sum from the lessening one, that, always at work, and always working the wrong way, must ere long make itself tremendously felt. If the patron of all evil, the father of all lies, wished to overthrow the British empire, he could not find or invent means better suited to his purpose than the present Corn-Laws, which do mischief in every way, and good in none. We are destroyed by a power tenfold more ruinous than that of compound interest on a borrowed capital employed in the cultivation of a profitless farm. The thing may go on as other losing concerns do, so long as persons can be found to pay the loss, and no longer. The most horrible of revolutions, recorded or conceivable, is coming as one that travelleth. In the meantime, what are our absolutists, *alias* Waterlooists, *alias* Peterlooists, *alias* Bourbonists, *alias* Ferdinandists, *alias* Miguelites, doing? They are shaking their clenched fists in the face of Eternal Wisdom, and crying 'Thou fool!' But instead of insuring their own destruction, by waging war on nature, instead of listening to the ravings of the Duke of Newcastle's Sadler—if they would save their estates, and avoid the necessity of breaking stones on the highways for subsistence, let them, while there is yet time, *if* there is yet time, imitate the Parliamentary conduct of Lord Milton, *whose words are things*, and but for whose efforts, in opposition to the wool-tax, England would not at this moment have been able to sell without loss, in any foreign country, *a single yard of woollen cloth.*

"Why are persons who boast of their ignorance, and who really are a century behind the people of England in knowledge, suffered to make laws? Because the people of England are not yet so enlightened as they ought to be. For if farmers knew that it is the Corn-Law which is destroying their capital—if merchants knew that it is the Corn-Law which is annihilating their profits—if manufacturers knew that it is the Corn-Law which stimulates the battle of fifty dogs for one bone—if shopkeepers knew that it is the Corn-Law which beggars them, by beggaring their customers—surely, I say, the plundered labourers of England would not alone be heard to curse the most revolutionary of enactments."

(d) *Our weapon is the whip of words,*
And truth's all-teaching ire.

Why are the peasantry discontented?—Because the bread-tax takes sixpence out of the labourer's shilling. "Oh, but we must cultivate the high moors, then all will be well!" That is to say, a further reduction must take place in the wages of labour! Yet with such fallacies as these are the people of England duped by their oppressors, who argue the question of cultivating waste lands, as if there were good land remaining uncultivated! We might as well expect to become rich by burning our property, as by wasting it in cultivating lands which will not pay for cultivation; and if we were actually to destroy our property to the amount of twenty millions annually, we should neither act so wickedly nor so ruinously as the landlords do, in forcing the cultivation of inferior soils; for while they raise rents, they lower wages, by diminishing the profits out of which wages are paid. When do they propose to refund what they have extorted?

(e) *How God speeds the tax-bribed plough,*
Fen and moor declare, man.

I complain not that the plough is driven where the poor man's cow was fed, but that the plough which is driven over the poor man's land is the rich man's plough.

(f) *Who would be a useful man?*
Who sell cloth or hats, man?
Who make boiler or mend pan?

A townsman of mine having objected to me, that the Corn-Law, as a direct tax, is utterly inadequate to produce the effects which I predict from it, I will state one or two of its direct consequences as a tax on British industry, skill, and capital. Its effects on the rate of exchange are equal to ten per cent. on our exports to the United States of America—say ten per cent. on fifteen millions annually; for if corn could be imported without restriction, bills at par, representing shipments of corn to England, might always be had in the market; or, if not, the agents of our merchants could and would remit at once, in grain or flour, with a saving to the British public of *one million five hundred thousand pounds a-year.* Superficial reasoners are not aware, that under the present amended Corn-Laws, the lower the duty the greater is the loss sustained by the consumer. This is easily proved. The law ordains that we shall not eat foreign wheat until the price in England is 70s. per quarter; the foreigner, therefore, bonds his corn, waits till the price is sufficiently high, then sells for 70s. what cost him 50s., paying a duty of 1s., and pocketing a profit of 19s. per quarter! In this way the British people sustain a further loss by the Corn-Laws of no less than *one million five hundred thousand pounds yearly.* If the trade in corn were entirely free, bread, in the opinion of the friend I alluded to, would be nearly as dear as at present. Perhaps so; but as one of two things would necessarily result from a free trade in corn—namely, a rise in wages, or a fall in the price of provisions—I will not contest this point with him. Luckily, we can ascertain, by a short process, what is the amount which, in the opinion of the landlords, the Corn-Laws, as a tax, cost the British community. These worthies are esteemed pretty keen-sighted as to their own immediate interests; and as they have rejected a fixed duty of 12s. per quarter, I think I am justified in concluding that in their estimation the present Corn-Laws are worth still more to them. Now, 12s. per quarter on fifty millions of quarters of corn annually consumed in Great Britain and Ireland, are equal to a tax of *thirty millions sterling a-year.* That this amount is by no means overstated, is evident from the official accounts laid before the House of Commons, which shew that the average price of wheat, in England, for the ten years ending in 1825, amounted to 67s. per quarter—say, a tax of 17s. per quarter—every shilling of which is equal to two millions five hundred thousand pounds laid directly on corn. Here, then, in three items only, is an amount of direct taxation resulting from the Corn-Laws which would nearly pay the poor-rates, and the interest of the National Debt! My townsman is aware, of course, that if the Corn-Laws raise the price of bread, they also raise, in the same ratio, the price of beef, mutton, butter, milk, bacon, and vegetables; and I think I could demonstrate, that, frightful as are the direct effects of those laws, their indirect effects in restraining our trade, establishing our rivals, and destroying capital here, or driving it hence, are still more important and deplorable. But the worst fact of the case remains to be stated—namely, that the landed worthies do not pocket more than seven or eight of the thirty or forty millions which the Corn-Laws annually cost this country; four-fifths of the whole being destroyed, and as completely lost to every man, woman, and child in England, as if thrown into the ocean. Was it Dibdin, who called Patience "a white-eared cherub?" The patience of John Bull is indeed *white-eared*, and his wisdom of the same valiant complexion. But we have occasion for patience, if, as the monopolists pretend, emigration is the only remedy for our embarrassment; for, if it is so, our case is utterly hopeless: capital can only remain here to be destroyed; the *capitalists will be the emigrants!* and neither the benevolence of the SADLERS, nor the philosophy of plunder and famine, has condescended to inform us how the destitute are to pay for their own expatriation. I may not be able to convince the landlords, but I have convinced myself, that, in the year 1831, the Corn-Laws will cost this country one hundred millions sterling, or about three times the rental of all the lands of the kingdom, and that they are acting with the accumulating power of compound interest. Who would be a useful man? Who would be a prudent man? Who would not be a madman, and attempt to stop the down-hill roll of headlong aristocracy?

(g) *"Pshaw! doubly-tax wheat, hemp, and flax!*
Tax Wool!"

Noodle, did'st thou ever read the history of the wool-tax? It is shorter than thy ears, and yet I doubt whether we shall ever see the end of it. When the bread-tax was inflicted as a tribute on that vanquished people who conquered at Waterloo, the agriculturists of the countries near the Baltic, no longer allowed to exchange their wheat for cloth in England, converted their arable land into sheep-walks. The Lords Shallow, with the aid of the Messrs Shark & Co., then laid a tax on foreign wool, the growers of which necessarily became manufacturers of cloth. They now undersell us in every market, not excepting our own; for although, by the exertions of Lord Milton, the wool-tax was repealed, the consequences remain. Yet, ever and anon, the Lords Shallow aforesaid, tired of growling, whimper for a wool-tax! After pauperizing the kingdom from sea to sea, what more would they have? An inscrutable Providence may permit them to wage war on Nature a little longer; but do they expect that, in the end, they will be able to dethrone the Almighty? Who will improve machinery, if the whole benefit of the improvement is

to be reaped by a set of "sneering," "idle," "legislatorial" "annuitants" and rascals? Who will invent a new machine, if the profit of it is to be swallowed, and, after a few years, the machine itself, with all its advantages, and the trade to which it belongs, transferred to their especial favourites, our foreign rivals, by a set of sneering, idle, territorial "scoundrels?" If our "sturdy beggars" dislike these terms, why do they use such? They are the mildest terms I can find in *Blackwood*, where they are applied, not to a gang of "hellish wretches," but to the most useful men in the empire; and, if this book reach a fourth edition, I will append to it a list of some of the beautiful epithets with which the advocates of the tax-eaters reward the plundered people for their base submission to an outrage which ought long ago to have pared the claws, drawn the teeth, and thinned the sides of every feudal monster (this term is not in *Blackwood*) prowling between John o' Groats and the Land's End. O Lord! how long?

(h) *Whip him, O Lord, with want and wo!*
Lord, teach him what his victims know!

It was a maxim of the Roman Law, that persons who would not hold their property without injury to the public, should not be allowed to retain it. *Now this law of the Romans is also a law of Nature.* Inevitably, then, and in the nature of things, if the landlords will not resign their bread-tax, they must lose their estates—not by spoliation, nor *merely* of right and justice, but *necessarily*. I do not say, that because—through their legislative usurpation, and by means of their bread-tax—they have destroyed more British capital in seventeen years than would pay off the National Debt, their estates ought, therefore, to be applied to the redemption of that debt, and for the exoneration of our descendants from taxes for ever—*these truths are self-evident, and need no stating*; but I speak of the inevitable: I say that, if the landlords persevere, they must, of necessity, lose their estates. Inclosures of waste lands are premiums offered to poverty for their destruction; and every diabolical addition to their enormous wealth, by means of such premiums to misery, is only like an additional dram swallowed by a hideous drunkard, producing a further enlargement of the magisterial liver, and another splendid pimple on the aristocratical nose. If they were not stone-blind to consequences, they would shrink with horror from the delusive "protection," to which they cling with the desperation of a sot to brandy. Where is that protection to be found? The workhouse knows it not; the trade which they have ruined knows it not; the pocket of the rate-payer knows it not; the whip, and the dungeon, have not been able to torture it into existence; the scaffold labours for it in vain; while Famine cries, "If it be food, let me devour it!" Time hath not seen it in his long journey; but Destruction says, "I have heard the name thereof; it cometh, and will come, the POVERTY *that shall instruct them!*"

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

PREFACE.

I have now a delightful duty to perform—that of returning my heartfelt thanks to almost the whole of the periodical press, for the extreme of kindness, and more than justice. Since the well-timed notice of the "Ranter," in the New Monthly Magazine and the Athenæum, almost every Liberal newspaper in the kingdom, and, with one or two exceptions, all the reviews and magazines, whether Tory, Whig, or Radical, have reviewed my compositions, in the same generous and manly spirit. To the Sun, the Morning Chronicle, the True Sun, the Times, the Spectator, and Examiner newspapers—to the Westminster, Eclectic, and Edinburgh Reviews—and to the New Monthly, the Metropolitan, the Monthly, Tait's, and Blackwood's Magazines—as well as to the Literary Gazette, the Athenæum, and the Monthly Repository—my thanks are particularly due. Writers directly opposed to me in politics—for no political opinions can be more unlike mine than those of the Edinburgh Review, and Blackwood's Magazine—have vied with each other in treating me with brotherly kindness, with paternal forbearance. This conduct is indeed noble, and, it grieves me to add, un-English. But does it not justify the hope, that the patrician Quarterly itself, in neglecting to review me, has not been actuated by any disdainful feelings towards the "Bard of the Beggars?" May I not humbly trust, that, as the editor of the Journal for lords and squires condescended to discover a mighty poet in John Jones, he will yet surprise the world by a still more signal instance of the lion's magnanimity?

He must, however, allow me to dip my pen once more in political prose. For at this awful moment, the question before us is not one of Whig or Tory ascendancy—of ballot, or intimidation—of triennial parliaments, or septennial corruption—of household suffrage, or fifty pound helotism; but of national life or death—of Free Trade or Destruction.

When the earth trembles beneath approaching footsteps, our sightless and limbless sister, the naked worm, warned of her danger, descends for safety. But they whom avarice has clothed in blindness, deafness, and stolidity, cannot be warned by the tremblings of the earth, or the gloom of the heavens, or the stillness which precedes the hurricane. With more of the reptile in their nature than the half-reasoning worm, they rear themselves, like the adder, on the ruts of the road by which destruction comes, and wait for the boot-defended tread which is to crush out for ever their venomous existence. To them, even the child of lawless law, Revolution itself, shouts and shrieks in vain; for Monopoly, though it has the ears of the ass, is deaf to thunder; and, with the eyes of the robber, it sees not, as it rushes on its prey, that success is a verdict of death, and a fee to the executioner. Time cannot teach it, nor History his chronicler.

What lost England her American colonies?—Not our attempts to tax them, but our restrictions on their trade with the West Indies. We might have succeeded in cursing them with arbitrary taxes, if we had not previously roused their just indignation by stopping the free course of their commerce. To encourage aristocratic jobbing and monopoly, we gave away an empire. What overthrew the power of Napoleon?—Not the burning of Moscow, not the spear of the Cossac, not the defection of Austria, not the frosts of the pole, nor Russian treachery or retaliation; but his own Berlin and Milan decrees. By lessening the comforts of every fireside, and turning the hearts of all Europe against him, they made it impossible for him to retrieve the disasters of his northern campaign; and as certainly overthrew him, as the steam-engine won the battle of Waterloo. Like the British aristocracy at this moment, he fought against the stars in their courses. May we then trust, that the fall of the bread-tax-eaters will be like his, sudden, speedy, total, and hopeless? If history lies not, we may, and must.

But twice, oh, thou, "who leanest on thine elbow watching time," twice, in vain, O history, hath he supplied thee, in little more than half a century with themes for the instruction of nations. When wilt thou record the Convulsion of Taxed Bread, and Restricted Wages? When horror-gathering acts of Parliament shall have stamped deep and broad their fiery and bloody precepts on wealth-created poverty, and victim-vanquished pride.

Agriculturists of Scotland, your peasant bard, forty years ago, spoke shrewdly to your purses; but you are as deaf to your immortal countryman, as to the warnings of history. "Low markets," said Burns, "consequently low rents." Well, have the Corn-Laws raised prices? If they have, what gain you by high prices, with high rents, and a ruinous competition for farms? But it is the tendency of those laws to lower the prices of corn in foreign markets, and, by paying a premium for the destruction of our manufactures, strike British agriculture a two-handed blow. When will your destroyers learn, that less is to be obtained, in the end, by legalized robbery, than by voluntary justice? After they shall have beggared their mortgagees, by destroying us and you. When will you see that free trade would steadily give you (with honest rents) the average prices of the undepressed market of Amsterdam, and the freight, or ten shillings per quarter, besides? Not until you attend to your interests, instead of listening to any man, who, like Chalmers, happens to be a walking sophism; or, like Wilberforce, or Hannah More, the incarnation of a clap-trap. Sincerely pious yourselves, you cannot see that they whom the worldly call pious, prosper only by worldly or sordid means, and, puffed by the worldly alone, are always and instinctively on the safe side. The only god they ever worship in spirit and in truth, is vulgarly called prudence. With them (if man is not the meanest of created things) life itself is a mistake—the commonest of all mistakes, and, in the base sense of the term, not an unlucky one; they mistake worldliness for religion. Their admirers do the same. But, Scotsmen, if they will not read the Bible to you, read it for yourselves; and it will tell you, "That he who taxes the bread of the poor is a murderer; that his name shall be a by-word; that the heavens shall declare his iniquity; the earth rise up against him; and a fire not blown consume his soul." Read it then aloud to the empire and the world, ere a shilling become a debt which cannot be discharged, and mothers kill for food the children of their sisters.

These remarks have a close connection with many of the following pages; but it cannot be said that they contain political poems only. They contain, however, some poems of that description, which I earnestly recommend to my countrywomen. My "Corn-Law Hymns" will not have been written in vain, if they lead only a few of the daughters of the past from the religion of worldliness, to that of truth and Jesus. May they induce the mothers of the future to educate their children politically; and teach them, as the mother of the Gracchi endeavoured to teach hers, all that is good and true—thereby redeeming the grossness of passion; even as in that immortal life which awaits the true patriot, who alone is the true Christian, death is swallowed up in victory.

I thank the readers of my two first volumes. They are, I believe, mostly poor people, who would have bought more of my books, if they had not wanted bread; and the sale, I have no doubt, will keep pace exactly with their progress in knowledge, virtue, and freedom. I know not whether my publisher is satisfied—I trust he is; but for myself, I am sufficiently rewarded, if my poetry has led one poor despairing victim of misrule from the ale-house to the fields; if I have been chosen of God to shew his desolated heart, that, though his wrongs have been heavy and his fall deep, and though the spoiler is yet abroad, still in the green lanes of England the primrose is blowing, and on the mountain top the lonely fir pointing with her many fingers to our Father in heaven—to him, whose wisdom is at once inscrutable and indubitable, and to whom ages are as a moment—to him who has created another and a better world for all who act nobly or suffer unjustly here; a world of river-feeding mountains, to which the oak will come in his strength, and the ash in her beauty—of chiming streams, and elmy vales, where the wild flowers of our country, and, among them, the little daisy, will not refuse to bloom.

From feelings and sentiments worthy of poetry, I turn with reluctance, to notice, in a few words, an attack which has been made upon me by an elegant rascal, paid for lying, I suppose, by the Breadtaxry of these realms, in their new character of Publishing Monopolists, *alias* the Society for the Diffusion of Useless Knowledge by Steam. This hireling, while he denounces my language as fierce and brutal, applies to me—without attempting to bring forward a single fact or argument in support of his assertions—about a column of direct falsehoods, expressed in such meek and silver-fork terms as these:—"Another prominent article in Elliott's creed is that, in this country, certain classes are in a state of constant combination for the direct and conscious purpose of plundering certain other classes. Addressing himself to the latter, he has, of course, no other recommendation to give them than that they should regard the conduct and professions of their oppressors with distrust, and hold themselves always in readiness for any favourable opportunity of retaliation or revenge. Nonsense as all this is, the man who exerts himself to instill it into the popular mind is a destructionist of the first water; and instinctive aversion has been excited by the frantic exasperation of his political antipathies, and the revolting unfairness and ferocity of his mode of warfare." Does this syllabub-throated logician, then, mean to insinuate that we are not bread-taxed? Or is it retaliation on the part of the plundered, to require that the robbers shall cease to rob? In ordinary, or retail cases of robbery and murder, the law retaliates by hanging the offenders; whereas, all that I require of the wholesale gentlemen is, that they would be pleased to live on their own. Has this servant of great folks—"who cannot live without," &c.—attempted to refute any one of my arguments? Is not the truth of those arguments capable of demonstration in figures? Is it false that palaced idlers—who, by restricting the food of a nation whose numbers they cannot restrict, tax the industrious eighty per cent., in order to secure two and a-half—are paupers of the worst description, and "destructionists of the first water?" I thank thee, Slave, for that phrase. Is it false that such men must know that they are "scoundrels?" I thank thee, Scrub, for that word. Is it false that they monopolize the power of making laws; and that, therefore, if they legislate in ignorance, their ignorance is without excuse? Is it false that milk-and-water phrases never yet cauterized and extirpated a national cancer? Is it false that history furnishes no instance of monopolists yielding to argument, or resigning their prey, except on compulsion? Is it false that, if the rate of profit in this country be continually lowered by act of Parliament,

capital must either be destroyed here, or ultimately compelled to seek employment elsewhere? Is it false that, if capital be destroyed here, or driven hence, the landowners and their mortgagees will be utterly and irretrievably ruined? Is it false that I ought to apply the terms which will best describe them to persons whom I prove to be both foolish and wicked, and therefore doubly dangerous? And is it not clear that, if I propose to do mischief by addressing the poor, and they refuse to hear me —as this accuser says they do—I can neither be "a destructionist of the first water," nor any destructionist at all?

He is a lying varlet who says I ever excited the poor to revenge. The single purpose of my writings is to prevent the catastrophe which the oppressors of all are bringing on themselves and the nation. I chose the title of the Splendid Village with this view; for if splendour is desirable, so is its permanency. The village which I described might, with equal propriety, be called the "Squalid," as the "Splendid." He is a dealer in lies for filthy lucre, who asserts that I ever assumed anything which I did not believe to be true. Who is the poet of the poor, if I am not? What other poet ever told them the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth? It is not true that the "Corn-Law Rhymes" are addressed exclusively to the poor. I wrote them in the forlorn hope that the opppessors of the poor would read them, and be warned. The employers of slanderers and assassins have in me a monitor, sufficiently acquainted with the poor to know them well, and sufficiently raised above their prejudices to be in no danger of yielding to their delusions. Was I led astray by the noncompetition gabble of the Owens, the Sadlers, the Cobbetts, or any other dupe or tool? Was it the currency doctors who taught me that Peel's Bill carried the Reform Bill? No. If this calumniator will not allow me to understand causes, I beg leave to tell him, that I, at least, know something about tendencies. Therefore it is that I point out the little cloud before it become the pall of the empire—a coffin-black firmament; and I thank this hireling for giving me another opportunity of warning the Breadtaxry that they must hasten to do or to suffer justice. It is not true that the people are now happier and better fed than they were in the days of my boyhood. How can my conclusions be "whims," if the profits of the steam-engine are devoured by tax-eaters, who make slaves of all merchants, manufacturers, shopkeepers, farmers, labourers, alike? To prove that the multitude are not less happy than they ought to be, this servant of monopolists must shew, that Watt and Arkwright never existed. It is not true that I ever imputed the miseries of the poor to the accumulation of capital: I leave such wisdom to the Owens and the Cobbetts, his allies. No. I impute those miseries to the destruction of capital by the landed classes; to their monopoly of the soil, and of the power of making laws, and to these causes alone. This is the true reason why their hirelings vilify me. Almost on the first publication of the "Corn-Law Rhymes," the Monthly Reviewers —in whom baseness seems to be an instinct or a fatality—not only slandered me by insinuation, but held me up as a fit object for an ex-officio prosecution, because I had asserted that it is of the essence of bad government "to make food dear and labour cheap." I am not ignorant that monopolists have always been persecutors, and sometimes murderers. They would destroy me if they could. But I will keep from under their feet if I can, and be robbed by them if I must. When they crush me, let them put on their boots; for they will not tread on a fangless worm. In whatever way they may again attack me, if they take anything by their motion but blows, the fault shall not be mine. Why then do they cry "Mad Dog?" Their yell of vindictive cowardice is more likely to frighten their mortgagees than injure me; and, when the mortgagees are in danger, the nominal owners of the estate will do well to make silence their sanctuary, and give themselves no airs. In the depth of that prudent silence, I implore them to read the following pages, in which they will find awful denunciations, but no malignity—deeper warnings than any in the "Corn-Law Rhymes"—more earnest pleadings, the result of conviction, which time has strengthened, that the blind and insane avarice of a few is hourly more and more endangering the safety of the many, the very existence of the body politic.

GREAT FOLKS AT HOME.

A Tragedy, in One Act.

To the followers of the fallen fortunes of him who would not be the greatest of mankind, I inscribe this picture of NAPOLEON BONAPARTE, and the magnanimous Aristocracy of Britain.

SCENE.—*The Infernal Regions.*—NAPOLEON *in deep thought.*—SATAN *watching near him.*

Nap. France! and ye Armies! is it thus indeed?
Sat. Poor Outcast! he too from the aspirer's heaven
Fell—never more, oh, never more to rise!
Nap. Heir of the saddest flower, and loftiest sun-beam!
To-morrow's Cæsar! if degenerate earth
Refuse to arm thy grown right-hand with steel,
Ravish from heaven the lightning, and avenge me!
Sat. Fraternal Spirit, rest!
Nap. The Alps are dust,
And Borodino is not e'en a name.
Sat. But yesterday still is—at least with thee.
How farest thou, Brother?
Nap. Brother?—oh, yes, yes!
The twain who highest sate, and lowest fell—
True brothers we! And I too sometimes talk
With joys that were.
Sat. What spectre of the past
Hath sadly visited thy restless thoughts,
Making truth hateful, and the wretched feel
He once was bless'd?
Nap. Not wretched if with thee,
Who, self-dethroned, yet reignest in thy soul.
But I did dream a hideous hateful dream,
Of fall'n insulted greatness. To have been
A King of Kings, and then to fall so low!
O Victory, whose shout alarmeth heaven!
And thou, the imperishable, that wilt be
Young, when the time-worn mountains shall have levell'd
The stream-loved valley with the fountain'd rock!
O Victory! O Glory! if ye can,
Make, if ye can, atonement!—But ye cannot;
No, ye impoison even the aconite.
Sat. Now will his soul, with baneful industry,
Convert the past to anguish, and extract

A torturing essence from the memory
Of god-like aims, and actions "worth ambition."
Nap. Marengo! Austerlitz! But ye are like
The rest—names, dreams! Ye come not, when I call
From my soul's solitude. I knew ye not
When I was happy. Then, the burning day
Had not yet risen, to drink from hope's pure flowers
The stainless dew, and on the scathed hill's side
Leave bare ambition blind in his own beams—
Alone and blind. But 'tis no matter—Night,
Deep night hath fall'n at last. Why was I not
Cast like a leaf upon the tide of time,
And, unresisting, borne to that dull sea
Where Envy sleeps? Selfish ambition! thou,
Vulgar alike in all, whate'er their ends,
Art but a yielding to our baser nature.
How dost thou bribe the demi-deity,
To ape despotic instinct! Too, too late,
Glorious American, I envy thee
The grandeur of thy super-human meekness.
Thy country saved, thou, her first citizen,
Wast greater than ten Cæsars! Earth, thy proudest
Name is George Washington!
Sat. What were the thoughts
Which thus could shake whom fate left unsubdued?
Nap. Methought that Stitchrag prick'd me with his needle;
That Fingerlace, the vile man-milliner,
Assail'd me with his yard-wand; that one Bolus
Call'd me "Poor Boney!"
Sat. See; whom have we here?
One of them seems to wear a scarlet necklace.
[*Enter* STITCHRAG *and* FINGERLACE.]
Nap. The very pair!—O Mars!—Trimmings and cabbage.
Finger. (*To* STITCHRAG.) Seest thou the rustic? not a bit of ribbon
About the clod!
Stitch. Unfashionable dog!
Look at the scoundrel's breeches; what a cut!
Nap. Lodi! Immortal Friedland!
Finger. Saint Taxation!
Thrice holy Corn-bill! Holier Peterloo!
Stitch. Now for the genuine Doric—hush! no laughter!
Nap. Thrones and the shopboard! Ancient goose and shears!
Can things like these rule nations? Destiny,
Thy sceptre is a bodkin!
Sat. (*To* FINGERLACE.) What art thou?
Finger. I? (*To* STITCHRAG.) Dost thou hear? the spooney does not know me—
Clod! not know me? May it please your Majesty,
I'm the man-milliner.
Sat. (*To* STITCHRAG.) And what art thou?
Stitch. The tailor; at your service.
Sat. And what would you
Here?
Finger. I would serve—
Stitch. (*Aside.*) In the capacity of master—
Finger. Your infernal despotship,
And this your empire. I much like the country;
And cannot praise enough your good old stock
Of penal fire, which I long to be using,
And will apply to great state purposes.
You have, of course, the necessary number
Of Radicals; if not, I well know how
To raise a crop.
Sat. But art thou qualified to serve me?
Finger. Qualified! Sir! [*To* STITCHRAG.]
Dost thou hear
The spooney?
Sat. When your neighbours stole your beef
And your plum-pudding, what was thy employment?
Finger. Furnishing tinsel.
Sat. When your working paupers
By thousands died of want, what then didst thou?
Finger. I measured ribbon.
Sat. But my subjects here
Eat victuals highly season'd. Should we have
A scarcity of pitch or brimstone broth,
Would the poor shine of tinsel fill their bellies?
Finger. No: but I'd yerk their guts with Stitchrag's shears.
Nap. Happy the land whose tailors are the law.
Sat. [*To* FINGERLACE.] I like thy humour.
Finger. (*Aside.*) Yes; I'll make you like it.
Let Stitchrag, sire, make you a pair of breeches,
And I will find the trimming.
Sat. I wear breeches!
Finger. Yes, sire, you shall.
Sat. I wont.
Finger. You shall.
Sat. I wont.
Finger. Measure him, Stitchrag, and I'll hold him.
Sat. (*Knocks* FINGERLACE *down.*) There,
Measure your bungler by his own dear rule.
Finger. (*Rising.*) Out with the clod! he wont wear breeches, Stitchrag.
Oh, could I die again!
Sat. Kennel, ye cur! [*Kicks* FINGERLACE *on the back front.*]
Finger. O foul dishonour! O indignity!
Hell, thou art lost, like Europe! and, once more,
I'll perish for the public good. A moment,
And this Corinthian column, this great pillar
Of state, shall fall once more. O Atlas, Atlas!
[*Exit* FINGERLACE.]
I'll go, and mourn "the statesman now no more."
[*Exit* STITCHRAG.]
Nap. And could'st thou, Fate, in vile alliance join
Reptiles, like these, with me?—venomous grubs
That die of their own poison? Shall such names,
Defiling glory's page, appear with mine?
Sat. Like fat vermin on a lion's mane,
Astonish'd at their pasture.
Nap. Still, O Fortune!
Still be thy crown the emblematic goose!
And may the shears spare thy skull-epaulettes!
What I have been is safe, in spite of thee.
Yet, O imperial throne, I bought thee dear!
The people's love, the bulwark of true hearts,
The fear'd, the dreadless, the invincible,
All vilely thrown away—for what? A bauble.
Thou too, poor shadow of a wife and queen!
Thou art, indeed, a shadow to my soul,
Dark and beloved, that will not pass away,
And stays in vain. Yet, yet, I will believe,
That in the boundless universe of God
There yet is hope. Is not our boy with thee?
Widow and wife! our boy—how beautiful!
"The young Astyanax!" I clasp ye both!
And is not hope with him? O can he prove
Unworthy of his sire! the desolate, [shalt be!"
The fate-dethroned? "Hail to thee, man that
I clasp ye in my soul, and am alone.
'Twas ever so. I perish'd as I lived—
Alone—unparallel'd in life's extremes!
Thou too wast dearly bought, O fatal shadow!
Sat. But to the island of the free belongs
Th' unenvied glory of thy death most lone;
A glory unsurpassable, unequall'd,
Unfading, as the golden characters
Which night reads calmly on her dome engraved,
While the unheeded stream of ages sweeps
Along, untired, for ever and for ever.

Nap. That tyrants should the tyrant overthrow
Is retribution just.
Sat. 'Tis also just
That the magnanimous punisher receive
What he hath earn'd, and wear his honours proudly.
Nap. First of plebeians, why did I become
Less than earth's greatest? I was my own idol;
And to myself I poorly sacrificed
Fame in the highest. Yet, O Freedom! yet,
If thou art unavenged, the island-tomb,
Untenanted, hears ocean's deathless foam,
With no inscription for eternity.
Sièyes, intrench'd in gold, smiles safe from scorn,
If thou art unavenged; Murat's rash plume
Floats on the surge of horror unappall'd,
And Lannes still—Fall'n Angel, pardon me!—
Even thy stern soul, at times, weeps mournful
thoughts for tears.

INSCRIPTION

FOR A SLAB, ON A ROCK IN THE OCEAN.

Be this your song, slow-moving, in deep hell,
To seize the honours ye have earn'd so well:—
"Ye fiends eclipsed! resign your fiery thrones
To us, whose greater worth your envy owns.
Sad years that were, and years that yet shall weep,
In beggary and in blood we steep'd and steep:
Ours were the deeds unmatched since time began—
And that Eternal Murder! of the man
Jail'd on the lone rock of the shrieking sea!
Who, last and greatest of the sons of fame,
Where mourns a fount, beneath a weeping tree,
Inhabits now 'the tomb without a name!'"

HYMN

WRITTEN FOR THE PRINTERS OF SHEFFIELD.

Lord! taught by Thee, when Caxton bade
His silent words for ever speak;
A grave for tyrants then was made,
Then crack'd the chain which yet shall break.

For bread, for bread, the all-scorn'd man,
With study worn, his press prepared;
And knew not, Lord, thy wond'rous plan,
Nor what he did, nor what he dar'd.

When first the might of deathless thought
Impress'd his all-instructing page,
Unconscious giant! how he smote
The fraud and force of many an age!

Pale wax'd the harlot, fear'd of thrones,
And they who bought her harlotry:
He shook the thron'd on dead men's bones,
He shakes—all evil yet to be!

The pow'r he grasp'd let none disdain;
It conquer'd once, and conquers still;
By fraud and force assail'd in vain,
It conquer'd erst, and ever will.

It conquers here! the fight is won!
We thank thee, Lord, with many a tear!
For many a not unworthy son
Of Caxton does thy bidding here.

We help ourselves, thy cause we aid;
We build for Heav'n, beneath the skies:
And bless thee, Lord, that thou hast made
Our daily bread of tyrants' sighs.

THE PRIMROSE.

Surely that man is pure in thought and deed,
Whom spirits teach in breeze-borne melodies;
For he finds tongues in every flower and weed,
And admonition in mute harmonies;
Erect he moves, by truth and beauty led,
And climbs his throne, for such a monarch meet,
To gaze on valleys, that, around him spread,
Carpet the hall of heav'n beneath his feet.
How like a trumpet, under all the skies
Blown, to convene all forms that love his beams,
Light speaks in splendour to the poet's eyes,
O'er dizzy rocks and woods, and headlong streams!
How like the voice of woman, when she sings
To her belov'd, of love and constancy,
The vernal odours, o'er the murmurings
Of distant waters, pour their melody
Into his soul, mix'd with the throstle's song
And the wren's twitter? Welcome then, again,
Love-listening primrose; Though not parted long,
We meet, like lovers, after years of pain.
Oh, thou bring'st blissful childhood back to me!
Thou still are loveliest in the lonest place;
Still, as of old, day glows with love for thee,
And reads our heav'nly Father in thy face.
Surely thy thoughts are humble and devout,
Flower of the pensive gold! for why should heav'n
Deny to thee his noblest boon of thought,
If to earth's demigods 'tis vainly given?
Answer me, sinless sister! Thou hast speech
Though silent. Fragrance is thy eloquence,
Beauty thy language; and thy smile might teach
Ungrateful man to pardon Providence.

SPENCERIAN.

Sun of Destruction; ne'er again arise
The flamy gloom of flaming temples o'er,
To shout thy words of fire beneath red skies,
Athwart fire-gleaming sea, and burning shore—
"Burn, burn, till all is burned;" Never more
Let men say, "Light destroys." No, rather crown
The Good dethron'd with beams that shone of yore;
As when a bard, of yet unborn renown,
Casts o'er his deathless page the light of suns gone
down.

SPRING.

Again the violet of our early days
Drinks beauteous azure from the golden sun,
And kindles into fragrance at his blaze;
The streams, rejoic'd that winter's work is done,
Talk of to-morrow's cowslips, as they run.
Wild apple, thou art blushing into bloom!
Thy leaves are coming, snowy-blossom'd thorn!
Wake, buried lily! spirit, quit thy tomb?
And thou, shade-loving hyacinth, be born!
Then, haste, sweet rose! sweet woodbine, hymn the
morn,
Whose dew-drops shall illume with pearly light
Each grassy blade that thick embattled stands
From sea to sea, while daisies infinite
Uplift in praise their little glowing hands,
O'er every hill that under heav'n expands.

A SHADOW.

A poor affrighted worm,
Where sky and mountain meet,
I stood before the storm,
And heard his strong heart beat.
He drew his black brows down—
My knees each other smote:
The mountains felt his frown,
His dark unutter'd thought.
The mountains, at his scowl,
Pray'd mutely to the skies:
He spoke, and shook my soul;
He scorch'd me with his eyes.
Alone, beneath the sky,
I stood the storm before:
No! God, the Storm, and I—
We trode the desert floor;
High on the mountain sod,
The whirlwind's dwellingplace,
The Worm, the Storm, and God
Were present, face to face.
From earth a shadow brake,
E'en where my feet had trode;
The shadow laughed and spake
And shook his hand at God.
Then up it rear'd its head,
Beneath the lightning's blaze;
"Omnipotent!" it said,
"Bring back my yesterdays."
God smiled the gloom away;
Wide earth and heav'n were bright;
In light my shadow lay,
I stood with God in light;
With Him who wings the storm,
Or bids the storm be still,
The shadow of a worm
Held converse on the hill.

ANTICIPATION.

Hail, Realm of gloom! whose clouds are ice! whose air
Is made of thought-sick sighs!
Whose fields are dead men's dust, from which despair
Shrinks as he dies!
Though on thee, and within (sad Infinite!)
Are darkness, death, and doom;
Beyond thee shines the sun of mind and might,
The Power that made thee, God—hail, Holy Light!
I come, I come.

PRESTON MILLS.

The day was fair, the cannon roar'd,
Cold blew the bracing north,
And Preston's Mills, by thousands, poured
Their little captives forth.

All in their best they paced the street,
All glad that they were free;
And sung a song with voices sweet—
They sung of Liberty!

But from their lips the rose had fled,
Like "death-in-life" they smiled;
And still, as each passed by, I said,
Alas! is that a child?

Flags waved, and men—a ghastly crew—
Marched with them, side by side:
While, hand in hand, and two by two,
They moved—a living tide.

Thousands and thousands—all so white!—
With eyes so glazed and dull!
O God! it was indeed a sight
Too sadly beautiful!

And, oh, the pang their voices gave
Refuses to depart!
This is a wailing for the grave!
I whisper'd to my heart.

It was as if, where roses blushed,
A sudden blasting gale,
O'er fields of bloom had rudely rushed,
And turned the roses pale.

It was as if, in glen and grove,
The wild birds sadly sung;
And every linnet mourned its love,
And every thrush its young.

It was as if, in dungeon gloom,
Where chain'd despair reclined,
A sound came from the living tomb,
And hymned the passing wind.

And while they sang, and though they smiled,
My soul groaned heavily—
O who would be or have a child?
A mother who would be?

FAMINE IN A SLAVE SHIP.

They stood on the deck of the slave-freighted barque,
All hopeless, all dying, while waited the shark;
Sons, Fathers, and Mothers, who shriek'd as they press'd
The infants that pined till they died on the breast—
A crowd of sad mourners, who sighed to the gale,
While on all their dark faces the darkness grew pale.

White demons beheld them, with curse and with frown,
And curs'd them, from morn till the darkness came down;
And knew not compassion, but laugh'd at their pray'r,
When they called on their God, or wept loud in despair;
Till again rose the morn, and all hush'd was the wail,
And on cheeks stark and cold the grim darkness was pale.

Then the white heartless demons, with curse and with frown,
Gave the dead to the deep, till the darkness came down:
But the angel who blasteth, unheard and unseen,
Bade the tyrants lie low where their victims had been:
And down dropp'd the waves, and stone-still hung the sail,
And black sank the dead, while more pale grew the pale.

Stern angel, how calmly his chosen he slew!
And soon the survivors were fearfully few;

For, wall'd o'er their heads the red firmament stood,
And the sun saw his face in a mirror of blood;
Till they fed on each other, and drank of the sea,
And wildly curs'd God in their madness of glee!

What hand sweeps the stars from the cheek of the night?
Who lifts up the sea in the wrath of his might?
Why, down from his glance, shrinks in horror the shark?
Why stumbles o'er mountains the blind foodless barque?
Lo, his lightning speaks out, from the growl of the gale!
And shrieking she sinks—while the darkness turns pale!

THE DYING BOY TO THE SLOE BLOSSOM.

Before thy leaves thou com'st once more,
White blossom of the sloe!
Thy leaves will come as heretofore;
But this poor heart, its troubles o'er,
Will then lie low.

A month at least before thy time
Thou com'st, pale flower, to me;
For well thou know'st the frosty rime
Will blast me ere my vernal prime,
No more to be.

Why here in winter? No storm lowers
O'er Nature's silent shroud!
But blithe larks meet the sunny showers,
High o'er the doomed untimely flowers
In beauty bowed.

Sweet violets, in the budding grove,
Peep where the glad waves run;
The wren below, the thrush above,
Of bright to-morrow's joy and love
Sing to the sun.

And where the rose-leaf, ever bold,
Hears bees chant hymns to God,
The breeze-bowed palm, mossed o'er with gold,
Smiles on the well in summer cold,
And daisied sod.

But thou, pale blossom, thou art come,
And flowers in winter blow,
To tell me that the worm makes room
For me, her brother, in the tomb,
And thinks me slow.

For as the rainbow of the dawn
Foretells an eve of tears,
A sunbeam on the saddened lawn
I smile, and weep to be withdrawn
In early years.

Thy leaves will come! but songful spring
Will see no leaf of mine;
Her bells will ring, her bride's-maids sing,
When my young leaves are withering
Where no suns shine.

O might I breathe morn's dewy breath,
When June's sweet Sabbath's chime!
But, thine before my time, O death!
I go where no flow'r blossometh,
Before my time.

Even as the blushes of the morn
Vanish, and long ere noon
The dew-drop dieth on the thorn,
So fair I bloomed; and was I born
To die as soon?

To love my mother and to die—
To perish in my bloom!
Is this my sad brief history?—
A tear dropped from a mother's eye
Into the tomb.

He lived and loved—will sorrow say—
By early sorrow tried;
He smiled, he sighed, he past away;
His life was but an April day—
He loved and died!

My mother smiles, then turns away,
But turns away to weep:
They whisper round me—what they say
I need not hear, for in the clay
I soon must sleep.

Oh, love is sorrow! sad it is
To be both tried and true;
I ever trembled in my bliss;
Now there are farewells in a kiss—
They sigh adieu.

But woodbines flaunt when blue bells fade,
Where Don reflects the skies;
And many a youth in Shire-cliffs' shade
Will ramble where my boyhood played,
Though Alfred dies.

Then panting woods the breeze will feel,
And bowers, as heretofore,
Beneath their load of roses reel;
But I through woodbined lanes shall steal
No more, no more.

Well, lay me by my brother's side,
Where late we stood and wept;
For I was stricken when he died—
I felt the arrow as he sighed
His last and slept.

WIN-HILL;*

OR,

THE CURSE OF GOD.

To Francis Place, Esq., author of "Illustrations of the Principle of Population," I respectfully dedicate this Poem.

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* The central mountain—not the highest—of the Peak of Derbyshire.

This day, ye mountains ! is a holiday ;
Not the bless'd Sabbath, yet a day of rest,
Though wrung by cant from sordid men, who pay
Their homage to the god whom cant loves best :
I hallow it to Heaven, and make it blessed.
Wild Moscar Dell, receive me ! headlong Wye,
Let my soul hear thee from the mountain's breast,
Telling thy streamlets, as they leap from high,
That richer, lovelier vales, and nobler hills, are nigh !

Now quit thy home, thou bread-tax'd Artisan !
Drink air and light, pale victim, while thou may'st !
What dost thou hence, umbrella'd Englishman,
Bound to thy pagod in the streeted waste ?
Deem'st thou that God dwells only where thou pray'st ?
Come worship here, while clouds the hill-tops kiss !
Death numbereth them who linger where thou stay'st,
Bliss-praying supplicant ! why shunn'st thou bliss ?
O can ye hope for heaven, and scorn a scene like this ?

Thy sisters, in the vales left far behind,
Are dead, late-coming Primrose ! months ago,
They faded slowly in the pensive wind :
Thou smilest—yes, the happy will do so,
Careless of others' wrongs, and others' wo.
Carnationed childhood's favourite ! thou too here ?
Ay, roses die, but daisies always grow.
Skeleton ash ! why lag behind the year ?
Where Don and Rother meet, no half-clad boughs appear.

Nor there are children of the young year seen ;
But tawdry flowers flaunt where they grew, and tell
How soon they died ! even as the base and mean
Laugh o'er a good man's grave. But near the well
That never fails, the golden pimpernel
Enjoys the freshness of this Alpine clime ;
And violets linger in each deep cool dell,
As lowly virtues of the olden time
Cling to their cottage-homes, and slowly yield to crime.

Last windflower ! knew'st thou April ? Infant June
Sees thee, and reddens at thy modest smile ;
And o'er thee still May's chaffinch sings his tune,
Well-pleased thy musing idlesse to beguile,
Where two streams meet beneath thy lonely isle ;
And cottony bog-rush, and the antler'd moss,
And the brake's lady* cluster round thee, while
Their heads at thee the rising foxgloves toss,
Where gnarled and lichened oaks the shadowed torrent cross.

So bad men frown ! but can their frowns compel
The cowslip to remain beneath the sod ?
Can they prevent the mosses of the dell
From lifting up their tiny hands to God ?
No ; to the soul these point its far abode,
And humbly tell us what the angels are ;
Immortal flowers ! as dewdrops on the sod
Pure ; or the beams that hymn, from star to star,
The King who paves with suns his wheelless, noiseless car.

* The Ladysmock, Rousseau's flower.

O thou great Scotsman, with the meteor-pen !
Come from thy Trosachs, Wilson,* come, and paint
Yon monarch of our Alps ! that little men
May feel thy Titan soul in their's, and faint
Almost with inspiration ; from the taint
Of worldly vileness freed, as by a spell ;
And made, at once, half-prophet and half-saint,
When reading thee to town-sick hearts, they tell
Of scenes few love like thee, and none can paint so well.

How wildly start the wild flocks as we gaze !
How softly sleeps upon the lap of noon
The cloud-couch'd lightning ! and how sweetly plays
The laughing blue above the blackness ; soon
To melt in fire and horror, where, aboon
This lesser giant's storm-swoll'n floods and firs,
Yon distant giant fronts the mid-day moon,
While solemnly the wind-fed wigan† stirs
Its flapping leaves alone, o'er fern and sun-bright furze !

To bathe with married waves their monarch's feet,
See, where the Ashop and the Derwent haste ;
And how he rears him from the vale, complete
In all his time-touched majesty, embraced
By the blue, bright blue heavens ; his proud brow graced
With that stone diadem which Nature made,
Ages before her practised hand had graced
With living gems the bluebell-haunted shade ;
Or, high in lucid air, her wind-swift wings displayed !

King of the Peak ! Win-Hill ! thou, throned and crowned,
That reign'st o'er many a stream and many a vale !
Star-loved, and meteor-sought, and tempest-found !
Proud centre of a mountain-circle, hail !
The might of man may triumph or may fail ;
But, Eldest Brother of the Air and Light,
Firm shalt thou stand when demigods turn pale !
For thou, ere Science dawned on Reason's night,
Wast, and wilt be when Mind shall rule all other might.

To be a crowned and sceptred curse, that makes
Immortals worms ! a wolf, that feeds on souls !
One of the names which vengeance whips with snakes,
Whose venom cannot die ! a king of gouls,
Whose drink is blood ! To be clear-eyed as owls,
Still calling darkness light, and winter spring !
To be a tiger-king, whose mercy growls !
To be of meanest things the vilest thing !
Throned asp o'er lesser asps ! What grub would be a king ?

But, crown'd Win-Hill ! to be a king like thee !
Older than death ! as God's thy calm behest !
Only heaven-rivalled in thy royalty !
Calling the feeble to thy sheltering breast,
And shaking beauty from thy gorgeous vest,
And lov'd by every good and happy thing !
With nought beneath thee that thou hast not blessed,
And nought above thee but the Almighty's wing !
O glorious god-like aim ! Who would not be a king ?

* The author of "The City of the Plague."
† The Mountain-ash.

But, lo, the Inn! the mountain-girded Inn!
Whose amber stream is worth all Helicon!
To pass it fasting were a shame and sin;
Stop! for the gate hangs well that hinders none;
Refresh, and pay, then stoutly travel on!
Ay, thou hast need to pree the barley-wine;
Steep is th' ascent, O bard! thou look'st upon;
To reach that cloud-capt seat, and throne divine,
Might try a stronger frame and younger limbs than thine.

Now, having drank of jolly ale enough,
To climb Win-Hill is worth ambition—yea!
Ambition, e'en if made of jolly stuff,
Should drink strong ale, or never will he say
To rival climbers—"Follow on my way!"
Old ale and jolly, be it dark or pale,
Drink like a topper, be thou green or gray!
Drink oft and long, or try to climb, and fail!
If thou would'st climb Win-Hill, drink old and jolly ale!*

"Blow, blow, thou breeze of mountain freshness, blow!"
Stronger and fresher still, as we ascend
Strengthen'd and freshen'd, till the land below
Lies like a map!—On! on! those clouds portend
Hail, rain, and fire!—Hark, how the rivers send
Their skyward voices hither, and their words
Of liquid music!—See, how bluely blend
The east moors with the sky!—The lowing herds,
To us, are silent now, and hush'd the songful birds.

This spot is hallow'd; sacred are these rocks,
To death and sorrow. Here, amid the snow,
A stranger died,† where seldom the wild flocks
Ascend to feed. Clouds! for ye only know
His griefs and wrongs, tell me his name of wo,
The mutter'd history of his broken heart;
That of a thing so noble we may owe
To you a relic, never to depart—
A tale o'er which proud men may sometimes pause and start!

From the hard world that scorn'd to scorn him, he
Retir'd, to die in solitude, as dies
The royal eagle in his majesty,
Where no mean bird may peck his fading eyes;
And told the mournful winds, with tears and sighs,
That so fall'n man should ever die, alone
And undegraded. O'er his cheek the skies,
Stooping in pity, wept to hear him groan,
And drown'd in faithful tears his soul's last low-breath'd moan.

Nor other tears for him were ever shed,
Except by her who, dying, to her breast
Clasped him, her child, and mourn'd his father dead;
And kiss'd and kiss'd that babe, and bless'd and bless'd
The orphan'd worm that suck'd her into rest;
And still, almost with hope her grief beguiled,
And tried to pray, till death her eyeballs press'd—
But could not pray, amid her ravings wild,
That God would take the life she gave to that poor child?

He died; but still the winds that lov'd him came
And whispered, though he made them no reply;
And still his friends, the clouds, bedew'd his frame
With frozen tears, less cold than charity.
But little men, whom summer brought to see
The heathcock's plumes, beheld him where he lay,
And robb'd him of that glorious tomb, which he
Chose in his pride; bearing his bones away—
His proud, insulted bones—to mix with common clay.

And I will *not* loathe man—although he be
Adder and tiger!—for his sake who died
Here, in his desolation great and free,
And with a fall'n immortal's might and pride,
On human nature's dignity relied,
When all else failed. No workhouse menial's blows
Check'd his last sob! No packthread-mockery tied
His sunken chin! Oh, sick of mortal woes,
I bless the pillow which his Hampden-spirit chose!*

High on the topmost jewel of thy crown,
Win-Hill! I sit bareheaded, ankle-deep
In tufts of rose-cupp'd bilberries; and look down
On towns that smoke below, and homes that creep
Into the silvery clouds, which far-off keep
Their sultry state! and many a mountain stream,
And many a mountain vale, "and ridgy steep;"
The Peak, and all his mountains, where they gleam
Or frown, remote or near, more distant than they seem!

There flows the Ashop, yonder bounds the Wye,
And Derwent here towards princely Chatsworth trends;
But, while the Nough steals purple from the sky,
Lo! northward far, what giant's shadow bends?
A voice of torrents, hark! its wailing sends;
Who drives yon tortured cloud through stone-still air?
A rush! a roar! a wing! a whirlwind rends
The stooping larch! The moorlands cry "Prepare!
It comes! ye gore-gorg'd foes of want and toil, beware!"

It comes! Behold!—Black Blakelow hoists on high
His signals to the blast from Gledhill's brow.
Them, slowly glooming on the lessening sky,
The bread-tax'd exile sees, (in speechless wo,
Wandering the melancholy main below,
Where round the shores of Man the dark surge heaves,)
And while his children's tears in silence flow,
Thinks of sweet scenes to which his soul still cleaves,
That home on Etherow's side, which he for ever leaves.

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* See our old song—"Back and Sides go Bare."

† A few years ago, a human skeleton was found near the summit of this mountain, and removed to the churchyard of the village of Hope, where it remains, uncoffined and uninterred.—*Hallamshire and Derbyshire Magazine.*

* Was this unfortunate a victim of the Corn-Laws? Then, for the honour of our common nature, the system of free exchange and unrestricted industry ought to be fairly and fully tried. If it fail to rescue man from pauperism, and his name from disgrace, which would enrage a viper, and make the earth-worm blush, let us, like the failing eagle, retire indignantly to woods and deserts, and perish there.

Now expectation listens, mute and pale,
While, ridg'd with sudden foam, the Derwent brawls;
Arrow-like comes the rain, like fire the hail;
And, hark! Mam-Tor on shuddering Stanage calls!
See, what a frown o'er castled Winnat falls!
Down drops the death-black sky! and Kinder-scout,
Conscious of glory, laughs at intervals;
Then lifts his helmet, throws his thunders out,
Bathes all the hills in flame, and hails their stormy shout.

Hark! how my Titan guards laugh kings to scorn!
See, what a fiery circle girds my state!
Hail mountains! River-Gatherers! Eldest born
Of Time and Nature, dreadful, dark, and great!
Whose tempests, wing'd from brows that threaten fate,
Cast shadows, blacken'd with intensest light,
Like the despair of angels fallen, that wait
On God's long-sleeping wrath, till roofed with night,
The seas shall burn like oil, and Death be waked with fright.

Storm! could I ride on thee, and grasp thy mane,
A bitless bridle, in my unburnt hand;
Like flax consum'd, should fall the bondman's chain,
Like dust, the torturers of each troubled land;
And Poland o'er the prostrate Hun should stand—
Her foot upon his neck, her falchion's hilt
Beneath her ample palm. Then every strand
Should hear her voice: "Our bulwark is rebuilt,
Europe! but who shall gauge the blood these butcher's spilt?"

And what are they, O land of age-long woes!
Who laid the hope of thy redemption low?
Are they not Britain's sons, and Labour's foes,
Who, sowing curses, ask why curses grow,
And league with fate for their own overthrow?
When will their journey end? They travel fast!—
Slow Retribution! wherefore art thou slow?
When will the night of our despair be past?
And bread-tax'd slaves become Men, godlike Men, at last?

Thy voice is like thy Father's, dreadful storm!
Earth hears his whisper, when thy clouds are torn;
And Nature's tremour bids our sister-worm
Sink in the ground. But they who laugh to scorn
The trampled heart which want and toil have worn,
Fear thee, and laugh at HIM, whose warning word
Speaks from thy clouds, on burning billows borne;
For, in their hearts, his voice they never heard,
Ne'er felt his chastening hand, nor pined with hope deferr'd.

O Thou whose whispering is the thunder! Power
Eternal, world-attended, yet alone!
O give, at least, to labour's hopeless hour
That peace, which Thou deny'st not to a stone!
The famine-smitten millions cease to groan;
When wilt Thou hear their mute and long despair?
Lord, help the poor! for they are all thy own.
Wilt Thou not help? did I not hear Thee swear
That Thou would'st tame the proud, and grant their victims' prayer?

Methought I saw THEE in the dreams of sleep.
This mountain, Father, groan'd beneath thy heel!
Thy other foot was placed on Kinder's steep;
Before thy face I saw the planets reel,
While earth and skies shone bright as molten steel;
For under all the stars Thou took'st thy stand,
And bad'st the ends of heaven behold and feel,
That thou to all thy worlds had'st stretch'd thine hand,
And curs'd for evermore the Legion-Fiend of Land!

"He is accursed!" said the sons of light,
As in their bowers of bliss they listen'd pale;
"He is accursed!" said the comets, bright
With joy; and star to star a song of bale
Sang, and sun told to sun the dismal tale,
"He is accursed! till the light shall fade
To horror in heaven's courts, and glory veil
Her beams, before the face of Truth betray'd;
Because he curs'd the Land, which God a blessing made!

"He is accursed!" said the Prince of Hell;
And—like a Phidian statue, mountain-vast—
Stooping from rocks, black, yet unquenchable,
The pale shade of his faded glory cast
Over the blackness of black fire, aghast—
Black-burning seas, that ever black will burn;
"He is accursed! and while hell shall last,
Him and his prayer heaven's marble roof will spurn,
Who curs'd the blessed sod, and bade earth's millions mourn!"*

THE WONDERS OF THE LANE.

Strong climber of the mountain's side,
Though thou the vale disdain,
Yet walk with me where hawthorns hide
The wonders of the lane.
High o'er the rushy springs of Don
The stormy gloom is roll'd;
The moorland hath not yet put on
His purple, green, and gold.
But here the titling† spreads his wing,
Where dewy daisies gleam;
And here the sun-flower‡ of the spring
Burns bright in morning's beam.
To mountain winds the famish'd fox
Complains that Sol is slow
O'er headlong steeps and gushing rocks
His royal robe to throw.
But here the lizard seeks the sun,
Here coils in light the snake;
And here the fire-tuft§ hath begun
Its beauteous nest to make.
O then, while hums the earliest bee
Where verdure fires the plain,
Walk thou with me, and stoop to see
The glories of the lane!

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* It was a maxim of the Roman law, that whoever made his property a nuisance, should cease to be a man of property; and this maxim was but a commentary on the unwritten law of God—unwritten, or with the pen of desolation written, over the face of fallen empires. When the patricians of Rome destroyed the Licinian Law, and monopolized the soil, did not their heads then ever-after fall like poppies?

† The Hedge Sparrow. ‡ The Dandelion
§ The Golden-Crested Wren.

For, oh, I love these banks of rock,
This roof of sky and tree,
These tufts, where sleeps the gloaming clock,
And wakes the earliest bee!
As spirits from eternal day
Look down on earth secure,
Gaze thou, and wonder, and survey
A world in miniature!
A world not scorn'd by Him who made
Even weakness by his might;
But solemn in his depth of shade,
And splendid in his light.
Light! not alone on clouds afar
O'er storm-lov'd mountains spread,
Or widely teaching sun and star,
Thy glorious thoughts are read;
Oh, no! thou art a wond'rous book,
To sky, and sea, and land—
A page on which the angels look,
Which insects understand!
And here, O Light! minutely fair,
Divinely plain and clear,
Like splinters of a crystal hair,
Thy bright small hand is here.
Yon drop-fed lake, six inches wide,
Is Huron, girt with wood;
This driplet feeds Missouri's tide—
And that, Niagara's flood.
What tidings from the Andes brings
Yon line of liquid light,
That down from heav'n in madness flings
The blind foam of its might?
Do I not hear his thunder roll—
The roar that ne'er is still?
'Tis mute as death!—but in my soul
It roars, and ever will.
What forests tall of tiniest moss
Clothe every little stone!
What pigmy oaks their foliage toss
O'er pigmy valleys lone!
With shade o'er shade, from ledge to ledge,
Ambitious of the sky,
They feather o'er the steepest edge
Of mountains mushroom high.
O God of marvels! who can tell
What myriad living things
On these gray stones unseen may dwell;
What nations, with their kings?
I feel no shock, I hear no groan,
While fate perchance o'erwhelms
Empires on this subverted stone—
A hundred ruin'd realms!
Lo! in that dot, some mite, like me,
Impell'd by wo or whim,
May crawl some atoms cliffs to see—
A tiny world to him!
Lo! while he pauses, and admires
The works of Nature's might,
Spurn'd by my foot, his world expires,
And all to him is night!
O God of terrors! what are we?—
Poor insects, spark'd with thought!
Thy whisper, Lord, a word from thee
Could smite us into nought!
But should'st thou wreck our father-land,
And mix it with the deep,
Safe in the hollow of thine hand
Thy little ones would sleep.

SLEEP.

Sleep! to the homeless, thou art home;
The friendless find in thee a friend;
And well is he, where'er he roam,
Who meets thee at his journey's end.
Thy stillness is the planet's speed;
Thy weakness is unmeasur'd might;
Sparks from the hoof of death's pale steed—
Worlds flash and perish in thy sight.
The daring will to thee alone—
The will and power are given to thee—
To lift the veil of the unknown,
The curtain of eternity—
To look uncensured, though unbidden,
On marvels from the seraph hidden!
Alone to be—where none have been!
Alone to see—what none have seen!
And to astonish'd reason tell
The secrets of th' Unsearchable!

FOR BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

The rabble boast their Watt and Bell,
The rabble of their Brindly tell,
The rabble mourn their martyr'd Muir,
And basely praise the basely pure.
Well, let them (Tailors) patch and plot,
And hymn the tinker, Margarot;
While Hulton, surnam'd Peterloo,
(As Tory Glory's annals shew,)
And Castles, Oliver, and Lowe,
Are Tory Glory's great and true;
And saintly Sidmouth, and that sinner
Blucherloo, the breadtax-winner.

THE FATAL BIRTH.

Foul parent of fair child, swoll'n Bread-tax! Thou,
On plunder'd commerce, didst beget Reform:
We see a bright to-morrow on her brow,
And make our hope thy nursling of the storm.
But many a fanged worm, and biped brute,
On whose dark heart the eye of love ne'er smil'd,
Would fain the promise of her morn refute.
Die then, dread power! and have no other child;
For it is written that thy second-born,
If second-born thou have, will thunder-strike
Temple and tower, of strength and splendour shorn
By hands with famine lean; and, Sampson-like,
Shaking the pillars of the gold-roof'd state,
Whelm high, and low, and all, in one remorseless fate.

EPIGRAM.

"Come, at last?" said Horns to Eldon—
"Better late than never:
My Depute! Thou long hast well done;
Keep my seals for ever."

TRANSPLANTED FLOWERS.

Ye living gems of cold and fragrant fire!
Die ye for ever, when ye die, ye flowers?
Take ye, when in your beauty ye expire,
An everlasting farewell of your bowers?
No more to listen for the wooing air,
And song-brought morn, the cloud-ting'd woodlands o'er!

No more to June's soft lip your breasts to bare,
And drink fond evening's dewy breath no more!
Soon fades the sweetest, first the fairest dies,
For frail and fair are sisters; but the heart,
Fill'd with deep love, death's power to kill denies,
And sobs e'en o'er the dead, "We *cannot* part!"
Have I not seen thee, Wild Rose, in my dreams?
Like a pure spirit—beauteous as the skies,
When the clear blue is brightest, and the streams
Dance down the hills, reflecting the rich dyes
Of morning clouds, and cistus woodbine-twined—
Didst thou not wake me from a dream of death?
Yea, and thy voice was sweeter than the wind
When it inhales the love-sick violet's breath,
Bending it down with kisses, where the bee
Hums over golden gorse, and sunny broom.
Soul of the Rose! What saidst thou then to me?
"We meet," thou said'st, "though sever'd by the tomb:
Lo, brother, this is heav'n! And, thus the just shall bloom."

SPENSERIAN.

O'er Byron's dust our sorrows should be steel'd,
Or sternly burn, as, burning slow, he died—
Till one long groan from shuddering Greece revealed
That fate had done her worst; and o'er the tide
Loud yell'd the Turk his triumph-howl of pride.
Yet will they flow, these woman's drops; for thou
Didst die for woman, though her hand applied
No gentle pressure to thy fever'd brow:
O Byron, "thou, within, hadst that which passeth show!"

SPENSERIAN.

Thou, Byron, wast—like him, the iron-crown'd—
Thought-stricken, scorch'd, and "old in middle age."
"All-naked feeling's" restless victims bound,
Ill could renown your secret pangs assuage.
Two names of glory in one deathless page!
Both unbelov'd, both peerless, both exil'd,
And prison'd both, though one could choose his cage;
Dying ye call'd, in vain, on wife and child;
And in your living hearts, the worm was domiciled.

HYMN,

WRITTEN FOR THE ROTHERHAM POLITICAL UNION, AND SUNG THERE ON THE CELEBRATION OF THE PASSING OF THE THREE REFORM BILLS.

We thank thee, Lord of earth and heav'n,
For hope, and strength, and triumph given!
We thank thee that the fight is won,
Although our work is but begun.

We met, we crushed the evil powers;
A nobler task must now be our's—
Their victims maim'd and poor to feed,
And bind the bruised and broken reed.

O let not Ruin's will be done,
When Freedom's fight is fought and won!
The deed of Brougham, Russell, Grey,
Outlives the night! Lord, give us day!

Grant time, grant patience, to renew,
What England's foes and thine o'erthrew;—
If they destroyed, let us restore,
And say to Misery, mourn no more.

Lord, let the human storm be still'd!
Lord, let the million mouths be fill'd!
Let labour cease to toil in vain!
Let England be herself again!

Then shall this land her arms stretch forth,
To bless the East, and tame the North;
On tyrant's hearths wake buried souls,
And call to life the murder'd Poles.

Sing, Britons, sing! The sound shall go
Wherever Freedom finds a foe:
This day a trumpet's voice is blown
O'er every despot's heart and throne.

THE EXCURSION.

Bone-weary, many-childed, trouble-tried!
Wife of my bosom, wedded to my soul!
Mother of nine that live, and two that died!
This day, drink health from Nature's mountain bowl;
Nay, why lament the doom which mocks control?
The buried are not lost, but gone before.
Then, dry thy tears, and see the river roll
O'er rocks, that crown'd yon time-dark heights of yore,
Now, tyrant-like, dethroned, to crush the weak no more.

The young are with us yet, and we with them:
O thank the Lord for all he gives or takes—
The withered bud, the living flower, or gem!
And he will bless us when the world forsakes!
Lo! where thy fisher-born, abstracted, takes,
With his fix'd eyes, the trout he cannot see!
Lo, starting from his earnest dream, he wakes!
While our glad Fanny, with rais'd foot and knee,
Bears down at Noe's side, the bloom-bow'd hawthorn tree.

Dear children! when the flowers are full of bees;
When sun-touch'd blossoms shed their fragrant snow;
When song speaks like a spirit, from the trees
Whose kindled greenness hath a golden glow;
When, clear as music, rill and river flow,
With trembling hues, all changeful, tinted o'er
By that bright pencil which good spirits know
Alike in earth and heaven—'tis sweet, once more,
Above the sky-tinged hills to see the storm-bird soar.

'Tis passing sweet to wander, free as air,
Blythe truants in the bright and breeze-bless'd day,
Far from the town—where stoop the sons of care
O'er plans of mischief, till their souls turn gray,
And dry as dust, and dead-alive are they—
Of all self-buried things the most unbless'd:
O Morn! to them no blissful tribute pay!
O Night's long-courted slumbers! bring no rest
To men who laud man's foes, and deem the basest best!

God! would they handcuff thee? and, if they could
Chain the free air, that, like the daisy, goes
To every field; and bid the warbling wood
Exchange no music with the willing rose

For love-sweet odours, where the woodbine blows
And trades with every cloud, and every beam
Of the rich sky! Their gods are bonds and blows,
Rocks, and blind shipwreck; and they hate the stream
That leaves them still behind, and mocks their changeless dream.

They know ye not, ye flowers that welcome me,
Thus glad to meet, by trouble parted long!
They never saw ye—never may they see
Your dewy beauty, when the throstle's song
Floweth like starlight, gentle, calm, and strong!
Still, Avarice, starve their souls! still, lowest Pride,
Make them the meanest of the basest throng!
And may they never, on the green hill's side,
Embrace a chosen flower, and love it as a bride!

Blue Eyebright!* loveliest flower of all that grow
In flower-lov'd England! Flower, whose hedge-side gaze
Is like an infant's! What heart doth not know
Thee, cluster'd smiler of the bank! where plays
The sunbeam with the emerald snake, and strays
The dazzling rill, companion of the road
Which the lone bard most loveth, in the days
When hope and love are young? O come abroad,
Blue Eyebright! and this rill shall woo thee with an ode.

Awake, blue Eyebright! while the singing wave
Its cold, bright, beauteous, soothing tribute drops
From many a gray rock's foot, and dripping cave;
While yonder, lo, the starting stone-chat hops!
While here the cotter's cow its sweet food crops;
While black-faced ewes and lambs are bleating there;
And, bursting through the briars, the wild ass stops—
Kicks at the strangers—then turns round to stare—
Then lowers his large red ears, and shakes his long dark hair.

SONG.

What! canst thou smile, thou heart of ice?
Thou! who wouldst basely sacrifice,
To pet thy meanest prejudice,
The holiest hopes of man?

Or dost thou sneer, in rage and fear,
Because the hated day is near,
When gods like thee must disappear,
Or have no worshippers!

Well, smile or sneer, and worship still
Old fraud's supremacy of ill;
But bow not unto Dagon's will
The hearts of honest men.

Thy slave-ador'd Abaddon's name
May none but lips like thine proclaim!
And ignominious be thy fame,
Even as thy virtues are!

SPENSERIAN.

Even here, on earth, not altogether fade
The good and vile. Men, in their words and deeds,
Live when the hand and heart in earth are laid;
For thoughts are things, and written thoughts are seeds—
Our very dust buds forth in flowers or weeds.
Then let me write for immortality
One honest song, uncramp'd by forms or creeds,
That men unborn may read my times and me,
Taught by my living words, when I shall cease to be.

* The Geornander Speedwell.

MAY.

Shade-loving Hyacinth! thou com'st again;
And thy rich odours seem to swell the flow
Of the lark's song, the redbreast's lonely strain,
And the stream's tune—best sung where wild-flowers blow,
And ever sweetest where the sweetest grow.
Who hath condens'd, O broom! in thy bright flowers
The light of mid-day suns? What virgin's cheek
Can match this apple bloom—these glowing showers
Of glistering daisies? How their blushes speak
Of rosy hues that red o'er ocean break,
When cloudy morn is calm, yet fain to weep,
Because the beautiful are still the frail!
Hark! 'tis the thrush!—he sings beneath the steep,
Where coolness ever charms the fountain'd vale!
How eloquently well he tells his tale,
That love is yet on earth, and yet will be,
Though virtue struggles, and seems born to fail,
Because fall'n man, who might be great and free,
Toils for the wolf, and bribes iniquity.
Thou art not false, sweet bird! thou dost not keep
The word of promise to our ear alone,
And break it to our hearts! Maids do not weep
Because thou feign'st; for thee no victims groan;
Thy voice is truth, and love is all thy own.
Then, for thy sake, I will not loathe man's face;
Will not believe that virtues are veil'd sins;
That bounty may be mean, and kindness base;
That fortune plays the game which wisdom wins;
That human worth still ends where it begins.
Though man were wholly false, though hope were none
Of late redemption from his sin-made woes,
Yet would I trust in God and goodness. On
From sun to sun the stream of mercy flows;
And still on humble graves the little daisy grows.

THE POLISH FUGITIVES.

WRITTEN FOR THE HULL POLISH RECORD.

The day went down in fire,
The burning ocean o'er—
A son and gray-hair'd sire
Walk'd, silent, on the shore.

They walk'd, worn gaunt with cares,
Where land and billow meet—
And of that land was their's
The dust upon their feet.

Yet they, erewhile, had lands
Which plenteous harvests bore;
But, spoil'd by Russian hands,
Their own was their's no more.

They came to cross the foam,
And seek, beyond the deep,
A happier, safer home—
A land where sowers reap.

Yet, while the playful gold
Laugh'd into purply green
The crimson clouds that roll'd
The sea and sky between,

The youth his brow uprais'd
From thoughts of deepest wo,
And on the ocean gaz'd,
Like one who fronts a foe.

The sire was calm and mild,
And brightly shone his eye;—
How like a stately child,
He look'd on sea and sky!

But on his son's lean cheek,
And in his hands, grasp'd hard,
A heart, that scorn'd to break,
With dreadful feelings warr'd.

For he had left behind
A wife, who dungeon'd lay;
And loathed the mournful wind,
That sobb'd—Away, away!

Five boys and girls had he:
In fetters pin'd they all;
And when he saw the sea,
On him he heard them call.

Oh, fiercely he dash'd down
The tear—that came, at length—
Then, almost with a frown,
He pray'd to God for strength.

"Hold up!" the father cried,
"If Poland cannot thrive,
The mother o'er the tide,
May follow with her *five*.

"But Poland yet shall fling
Dismay on Poland's foes,
As when the Wizard King*
Aveng'd her ancient woes.

"For soon her cause will be
Rous'd Europe's battle cry;
'To perish or be free!
To conquer or to die!'"

His hands clasp'd o'er his head,
The son look'd up for aid;
"So be it, Lord!" he said,
And still look'd up, and pray'd,

Till from his eyes, like rain,
When first the black clouds growl,
The agony of pain,
In tears, gush'd from his soul.

EPISTLE.

My pious Friend! what shall I say
To one so wise and grave?
I got your letter t'other day;
It bids me be a slave.

"Discard," you say, "the poor man's pain,
The poor man's joys discard;
Such themes," you say, "true bards disdain;"
I, then, am no true bard.

Because your dog obeys you well,
And well by you is fed,
Must I obey the dogs of hell
Who growl, and snatch my bread?

Slaves fawn; but do they fawn for nought?
Yes, slaves there are, indeed,
Who bribe themselves with their own groat,
And lick the dogs they feed!

A better aim will I prefer,
Nor fawn on fool or knave,
Like many a tyrant-homager;
Immortal! yet a slave.

SPENSERIAN.

I saw a horrid thing of many names,
And many shapes. Some call'd it wealth, some power,
Some grandeur. From its heart it shot black flames,
That scorch'd the souls of millions, hour by hour;
And its proud eyes rain'd everywhere a shower
Of hopeless life, and helpless misery;
For, spous'd to fraud, destruction was its dower!
But its cold brightness could not hide from me
The parent base of crime, the nurse of poverty!

SPENSERIAN.

The marble forms of mortals half divine
Yield silently the impress grand of mind
To time and ruin: long the weltering brine,
With heaven's red bolt and reinless blast combined,
Assails the rock in vain: even in the wind,
Slow burns the mighty oak, the forest-king,
Majestic still: so, lofty souls, declined
From their high deeds, a careless mantle fling
O'er cureless wounds, and smile—though life is withering.

SPENSERIAN.

A tear for thee? Not, Byron, if thy name
Shall be a watchword to unchain the slave,
Rolling o'er tyrant's hearts like thundering flame,
And kindling, as with soul, th' embattled wave;
Till conquering Freedom, on their briny grave,
Find Greeks like those who died at Salamis.
Arise, and equal them, ye modern brave!
Let past and future ages yield to this!
And be your names a spell, as Byron's was and is.

SPENSERIAN.

A tear for Byron? Weakness mourns the weak,
And Beauty dies in weeping Loves' embrace,
And common frailties common sorrows seek.
But Scourger of the scourgers of thy race!
Thou aw'st me so, that to thy resting place

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* The name which the Turks, in their superstitious dread, gave to the great Sobieski.

I bring stern feelings, not unmixed with fear.
Standing before the fear'd of all the base,
I, who oft wept thee, cannot weep thee here,
Bard of the broken heart, high soul, and burning
tear!

AIR AND LIGHT ON STANEDGE.

Air—vital Air! and beauty-breathing Light!
The acred demons have not tax'd you here;
As in the dim town's thick blood-thickening night
Of nights and days, where men from year to year
Toil for restricted food. Twins! pure and bright
As sister angels, clad in stainless white!
Free dwell ye on the mountain's summit bare:
And man shall yet be free, in hell's despite,
To reap enfranchised harvests everywhere;
Nor Want ask leave to toil, law-wedded to Despair.

COME AND GONE.

The silent moonbeams on the drifted snow
Shine cold, and pale, and blue,
While through the cottage-door the yule log's glow
Cast on the iced oak's trunk and gray rock's brow
A ruddy hue.

The red ray and the blue, distinct and fair,
Like happy groom and bride,
With azured green, and emerald-orange glare,
Gilding the icicles from branches bare,
Lie side by side.

The door is open, and the fire burns bright,
And Hannah, at the door,
Stands—through the clear, cold, mooned, and starry
night,
Gazing intently towards the scarce-seen height,
O'er the white moor.

'Tis Christmas eve! and, from the distant town,
Her pale apprenticed son
Will to his heart-sick mother hasten down,
And snatch his hour of annual transport—flown
Ere well begun.

The Holy Book unread upon his knee,
Old Alfred watcheth calm;
Till Edwin comes, no solemn prayer prays he,
Till Edwin comes, the text he cannot see,
Nor chant the psalm.

And comes he not? Yea, from the wind-swept hill
The cottage-fire he sees;
While of the past remembrance drinks her fill,
Crops childhood's flowers, and bids the unfrozen rill
Shine through green trees.

In thought, he hears the bee hum o'er the moor;
In thought, the sheep-boy's call;
In thought, he meets his mother at the door;
In thought, he hears his father, old and poor,
"Thank God for all."

His sister he beholds, who died when he,
In London bound, wept o'er
Her last sad letter; vain her prayer to see
Poor Edwin yet again:—he ne'er will be
Her playmate more!

No more with her will hear the bittern boom
At evening's dewy close!
No more with her will wander where the broom
Contends in beauty with the hawthorn bloom
And budding rose!

Oh, love is strength! love, with divine control,
Recalls us when we roam!
In living light it bids the dimmed eye roll,
And gives a dove's wing to the fainting soul,
And bears it home.

Home!—that sweet word hath turned his pale lip
red,
Relumed his fireless eye;
Again the morning o'er his cheek is spread;
The early rose, that seemed for ever dead,
Returns to die.

Home! home!—Behold the cottage of the moor,
That hears the sheep-boy's call!
And Hannah meets him at the open door
With faint fond scream; and Alfred, old and poor,
"Thanks God for all!"

His lip is on his mother's; to her breast
She clasps him, heart to heart;
His hands between his father's hands are pressed;
They sob with joy, caressing and caressed:
How soon to part!

Why should they know that thou so soon, O Death!
Wilt pluck him, like a weed?
Why fear consumption in his quick-drawn breath?
Why dread the hectic flower, which blossometh
That worms may feed?

They talk of other days, when, like the birds,
He culled the wild flower's bloom,
And roamed the moorland, with the houseless herds;
They talk of Jane's sad prayer, and her last words,
"Is Edwin come?"

He wept. But still, almost till morning beamed,
They talked of Jane—then slept.
But, though he slept, his eyes, half open, gleamed;
For still of dying Jane her brother dreamed,
And, dreaming, wept.

At mid-day he arose, in tears, and sought
The churchyard where she lies.
He found her name beneath the snow-wreath
wrought;
Then, from her grave, a knot of grass he brought,
With tears and sighs.

The hour of parting came, when feelings deep
In the heart's depth awake.
To his sad mother, pausing oft to weep,
He gave a token, which he bade her keep
For Edwin's sake.

It was a grassy sprig, and auburn tress,
Together twined and tied.
He left them, then, for ever! could they less
Than bless and love that type of tenderness?—
Childless they died!

Long in their hearts a cherished thought they wore;
And till their latest breath,
Blessed him, and kiss'd his last gift o'er and o'er;
But they beheld their Edwin's face no more
In life or death!

For where the upheav'd sea of trouble foams,
And sorrow's billows rave,
Men, in the wilderness of myriad homes,
Far from the desert, where the wild flock roams,
Dug Edwin's grave.

A THUNDER STORM IN WINTER.

He spake to eye and ear! and, like a tree
Rooted in heaven, shot down the branchy flame,
While the blue moonlight vanished suddenly.
Brighter than light on snow, the brightness came,
Filling the vales with forests of strange fire,
The streams with blood; and flinging o'er the cloud
Banners of crimson, lac'd with silver wire.
Down to mute earth the giant darkness bowed,
Giving the hill immeasurable height,
That propp'd the sky; then changed the troubled form,
While from his bosom fell the headlong weight
Of vollied hail; and, whispering through the storm,
The thunderer spake again: "What fear'st thou?
Live, poor worm!"

PROLOGUE TO THE CORN-LAW RHYMES.

For thee, my country, thee, do I perform,
Sternly, the duty of a man born free,
Heedless, though ass, and wolf, and venomous worm,
Shake ears and fangs, with brandish'd bray, at me;
Alone as Crusoe on the hostile sea,
For thee, for us, for our's, do I upraise
The standard of my song! for thine and mine
I toll the knell of England's better days;
And lift my hated voice that mine and thine
May undegrade the human form divine.
Perchance that voice, if heard, is heard too late:
The buried dust of Tyre may wake, and sway
Reconquer'd seas; but what shall renovate
The dead-alive, who dread no judgment day?
Souls, whom the lust of gold hath turned to clay?
And what but scorn and slander will reward
The rabble's poet, and his honest song?
Gambler for blanks! thou play'st an idiot's card;
For, sure to fall, the weak attack the strong,
Ay, but what strength is their's, whose might is based on wrong?

TO SAINT A. A——.

Why doth the lark proclaim that he is free?
The swallow chase the sunbeams in his glee?
And winds and streams, like happiest boys at play,
Sport with the wild rose on the Sabbath-day?
Because the Hater of the heart of guile
Loves the glad worship of the song and smile.
Go, kill the insect, lest it sport its hour—
Or dash the dew-drop from the happy flower:
But hope not that God's power will quail to thine,
Flowers cease to bloom, or Sabbath suns to shine;
Or that, when justice wakes, to pay her debt,
Long-suffering will forgive thee, or forget,
Or fail on Infamy's broad page to write
All loathsome names with thine, Monk-hearted hypocrite!

FROM GOETHE.

How like a stithy is this land!
And we lie on it like good metal
Long hammer'd by a senseless hand!
But will such thumping make a kettle?

CANNING.

He rose—a veteran proud of honest scars;
He stood—a bard, with lightning in his look;
He spoke—Apollo had the voice of Mars:
His frown all hope from phalanx'd faction took,
While flashed his satire, like a falchion bared,
On all who meanly thought, or basely dared.
He spoke, and died. And therefore must the sky
Return to sunless, moonless, starless night?
And therefore must the hopes of commerce fly
To climes unsatrapp'd? O departing light,
Linger awhile! thy loveliness is might,
And youth, and glory. Earth, from east to west,
Uplift thy multitudinous hands in prayer!
Laugh, stormy Russ! to thee the worst is best.
Shout, foes of Man! the scourge and rack prepare!
But, Erin, there is hope in thy despair.
And, Freedom! faint not thou, though Canning dies.
Weak is the State, and tottering to its fall,
That on one mind for strength and life relies;
That State shall be an omen unto all
Who stand not self-supported, and appal
E'en tyrants, blindly digging their own graves.
But Freedom's hope, when other hope is none,
Calm, or perturb'd, remains; like winds and waves,
Alike surviving battles lost or won;
More deathless than the dust of Marathon.

FOREST WORSHIP.

Within the sun-lit forest,
Our roof the bright blue sky,
Where fountains flow, and wild flowers blow,
We lift our hearts on high:
Beneath the frown of wicked men
Our country's strength is bowing;
But, thanks to God! they can't prevent
The lone wildflowers from blowing!

High, high above the tree-tops,
The lark is soaring free;
Where streams the light through broken clouds
His speckled breast I see:
Beneath the might of wicked men
The poor man's worth is dying;
But, thank'd be God! in spite of them,
The lark still warbles flying!

The preacher prays, "Lord, bless us!"
"Lord, bless us!" echo cries;
"Amen!" the breezes murmur low;
"Amen!" the rill replies:
The ceaseless toil of wo-worn hearts
The proud with pangs are paying;
But here, O God of earth and heaven!
The humble heart is praying?

How softly, in the pauses
Of song, re-echoed wide,
The cush-t's coo, the linnet's lay,
O'er rill and river glide!

With evil deeds of evil men
Th' affrighted land is ringing;
But still, O Lord! the pious heart
And soul-toned voice are singing!

Hush! hush! the preacher preacheth:
"Wo to the oppressor, wo!"
But sudden gloom o'ercasts the sun
And sadden'd flowers below:
So frowns the Lord!—but, tyrants, ye
Deride his indignation,
And see not in his gather'd brow
Your days of tribulation!

Speak low, thou heaven-paid teacher!
The tempest bursts above:
God whispers in the thunder: hear
The terrors of his love!
On useful hands, and honest hearts,
The base their wrath are wreaking;
But, thank'd be God! they can't prevent
The storm of heav'n from speaking.

A SONG IN EXILE.

Yes, with groans my lyre is strung;
Tears, from Poland's ruin wrung,
Flow in music from my tongue,
Poland's tears and Liberty's.

England saw our setting sun!
Britons! was it wisely done?
You gave Warsaw to the Hun!
Why not London, Englishman?

Lo! while Russia's iron tread,
Where we fell or whence we fled,
Shakes the dust of Poland's dead!
Europe trembles guiltily!

Tyrant! twice we overthrew
Hordes of thine, to tyrants true!
Twice we smote and twice we slew,
Recreant France! thy conquerors.

Yet, with us was Europe sold;
Gaul's delay and England's gold,
Frighted France and Britain cold,
Bribed the Goth to purchase her.

Poland fell—and they may fall,
Crush'd on Freedom's funeral pall;
But the Lord is Lord of all;
Thou, O Father, tremblest not!

Hopeless, homeless, do we roam?
Be Revenge our hope and home!
Thoughts that quench, in gory foam,
Moscow's fiery funeral!

By Polonia's gory sod!
Dig thou wide, Polonia's God,
Dig thou deep, where freemen trod,
Russia's grave and Tyranny's.

SPENSERIAN.

Thou art not bread-tax'd, Falcon! thou fear'st not
The haughty worms that feed on toil defied;
Thou art not on the page of heav'n a blot;
Thou scorn'st to fatten beastly power and pride:
Therefore the free air weds thy dauntless side,
The all-bless'd sun, undazzled, meets thine eye,
The chainless cloud thy wing. Oh, wheeling wide,
Bid soul-bow'd man look upward! where the sky,
Arming for battle, growls, "Rise, Slave! be free,
or die!"

EPITAPH,

Our friend, when other friend was none;
Our champion, when we had but one;
Curs'd by all rogues, beneath this sod
Bill Cobbett lies—a Man, by God!

SONG.

Hurrah for the land of the high and the low,
Where the only man safe is the lowest of all!
Where tenpenny Jem sneers at ninepenny Joe,
And the low ape the lofty, and pride fears no fall;
And Dick, from the pop-shop, looks big as a prince
At Tom from the pop-shop a Saturday since.

Hurrah for the land where the scab of to-day
Claims kindred with ulcers a hundred years old,
And new pus turns pale, lest the knife cut away
Some Ancient of Fetor, gore-clotted with gold,
And lively and lousy with venom, that makes
The grubs which it drops upon turn into snakes.

But—Day of the banquet for long-trampled worms,
When millions, all hissing and fang'd, will come forth!
Oh, ne'er may'st thou dawn upon horrible forms,
That will sweep o'er the isle like the wing of the north,
Drink horror for wine, under shriek-shaken skies,
And quench thy red light in the glare of their eyes!

ON AN ORIGINAL SKETCH,

DRAWN WITH A PENCIL ON A WALL, BY MY SON, FRANCIS.

I saw a head, a young but lifeless face—
On its dark hair, and two white wings, reposed,
As on a pillow. Tears had left their trace
Down each sad cheek; beneath dim eyes half-closed,
The calm lips smiled; and like a sky arose,
Amid thick curls, the forehead domed for thought.
It lay, as if the soul—though worn with woes,
And bathed in parting tears—serenely sought
For strength in sleep, before it wing'd its flight
From darkness, doubt, and dust, to dwell with God, in light.

LEGION.

A PORTRAIT.

Wallowing in wealth, and yet an almoner!
Shark goes not to the workhouse for his pay,
But wrings his bread-tax from the labourer;
Then to the treadmill takes his righteous way,
To see his victim-vagabonds display

Their British virtues—but he never treads !
In vain, the merchant pleads for leave to sell ;
In vain, for leave to toil, the labourer pleads ;
In vain, to Shark, of ruin'd trade we tell !
Oh, for a law to purge this demon's hell,
And cast out fiends ! or teach the nuisance vile
He must not make the general loss his gain !
Or whip him naked through the bankrupt isle !
That he may reap some portion of the pain
With which he sows our hearths, and so restrain
His dev'lish appetite for Famine's tears !

SONG.

They sold the chairs, they took the bed, and went ;
A fiend's look after them the husband sent ;
His thin wife held him faintly, but in vain ;
She saw the alehouse in his scowl of pain—
Hurrah, for bread-tax'd England !

Upon her pregnant womb her hand she laid,
Then stabb'd her living child ! and shriek'd, dismay'd—
"Oh, why had I a mother !" wildly said
That saddest mother, gazing on the dead—
Hurrah for bread-tax'd England !

Slowly she turn'd, and sought the silent room—
Her last-born child's lone dwellingplace and tomb !
Because they could not purchase earth and prayer,
The dear dead boy had long lain coffin'd there !—
Hurrah for bread-tax'd England !

But that boy hath a sister—where is she ?
Dying, where none a cherub fall'n may see :—
"Mother ! O come !" she sobs, with stifled groan,
In that blest isle, where pity turns to stone—
Hurrah for bread-tax'd England !

Before the judge, the childless stood amazed,
With none to say, "My Lord ! the wretch is crazed."
Crowds saw her perish, but all eyes were dry ;
Drunk, in the crowd, her husband saw her die !
Hurrah for bread-tax'd England !

Around the murderer's wrists they lock the chain :
What, tyrant ? whom hath Rapine's victim slain ?
The widow, hunger-stung and sorrow-bent,
Who ask'd, with tears, her lodger's weekly rent !
Hurrah for bread-tax'd England !

O Wholesale Dealers in waste, want, and war !
Would that your deeds were written !—and they are !
Written and graved, on minds and hearts oppress'd ;
Stamp'd deep, and blood-burnt-in, o'er realms unbless'd !—
Hurrah for bread-tax'd England !

TO MR COSTELLO,

ON HIS INSTITUTION FOR BREAKING THE STONE IN THE BLADDER.

The man who bade the needle
Point ever to its star,
Gave many a land a sister-land,
O'er roaring seas afar.
Watt's vapoury lever yet shall lift
All hearts that pine and languish ;
And Cluley's skill, Costello's worth,
Have found a heav'n for anguish.

Hast thou not honour'd Newton,
Whose mind untwisted light,
And on th' unletter'd ether wrote
The laws of day and night ?
But long disease and torture tried
The mind that hath no fellow ;
The stone, the stone, the sleepless stone !
Where then wast thou, Costello ?

Hast thou not honour'd Franklin,
Of honest men the best ;
Whose self-taught genius boldly made
The lightning's flash his guest ?
But long disease and torture turn'd
His cheek's fresh roses yellow ;
The stone, the stone, the torturing stone !
Ah ! where wast thou, Costello ?

Thy own Buffon, O Nature !
The genial and the gay,
With whose free soul through deserts thou
Didst wander day by day ;
Thy chainless child the stone bound down,
In bonds of pain to languish ;
And no Costello came to say—
"I break thy bonds of anguish."

Too long in vain, Improvement,
The sufferers yearn'd for thee,
With teeth set, lips retracted, eyes
Turn'd up in agony ;
The sleepless life of restless years,
The pang that hath no fellow,
Too long cried, "Hasten to be born !
Pain waits too long, Costello."

TO THE BRAMBLE FLOWER.

Thy fruit full-well the schoolboy knows,
Wild bramble of the brake !
So, put thou forth thy small white rose ;
I love it for his sake.
Though woodbines flaunt and roses glow
O'er all the fragrant bowers,
Thou needst not be ashamed to shew
Thy satin-threaded flowers ;
For dull the eye, the heart is dull,
That cannot feel how fair,
Amid all beauty beautiful,
Thy tender blossoms are !
How delicate thy gauzy frill !
How rich thy branchy stem !
How soft thy voice, when woods are still,
And thou sing'st hymns to them ;
While silent showers are falling slow
And, 'mid the general hush,
A sweet air lifts the little bough,
Lone whispering through the bush !
The primrose to the grave is gone ;
The hawthorn flower is dead ;
The violet by the moss'd gray stone
Hath laid her weary head ;
But thou, wild bramble ! back dost bring,
In all their beauteous power,
The fresh green days of life's fair spring,
And boyhood's blossomy hour.
Scorn'd bramble of the brake ! once more
Thou bid'st me be a boy,
To gad with thee the woodlands o'er,
In freedom and in joy.

SPENSERIAN.

All unmatch'd Shakspeare, and the blind old Man
Of London, hymn in every land and clime
Our country's praise, while many an artisan
Spins for her glory school-taught lays sublime.
Them in her bosom, be they blank or rhyme,
Oblivious spirits gently will inter.
But three unborrow'd strains will to all time
Give honour, glory, highest laud to her—
Thalaba! Peter Bell! the Ancient Mariner!

OGDEN.

Where now art thou, in thy despair,
"Revered and ruptured Ogden!" where?
Still dost thou live, to feel and see
The woes of bread-tax'd misery,
Which justly scourge the thousands vile
Who paid thy pangs with taunt and smile?
Or, like thy praised and classic foe,
Hast thou thy bed with worms below?
From Chiswick's halls—no more to sneer,
With pauper lords, at victims here—
Pierced by the shaft of coward scorn,
In mournful state, we saw him borne.
But thou didst quit the dungeon's shade,
With none to pity, none to aid,
While he stood up in pomp and might,
Like fire at noon, a light in light—
Tyrants self-doom'd! whose withering words
Are cruel as your jails and swords!
Lo! men yet live, though scorn'd they be,
Who gibbet for eternity!
And yet your bread-tax lives, to say
That Sidmouth lived, and Castlereagh;
And tell a nation, triumph-lost,
What thirty years of crime may cost!

SONG.

O why is gladness turned to wo?
And wealth to beggary too?
John Payall! if thou dost not know,
Ask Blucher's Waterloo.

And why doth Hope take wing and fly?
And why is Conscience gone?
Ask Pitt in hell—or, by and by,
Ask Famine's Wellington.

PAPER AND GOLD.

Your paper-rents, ye breadtax-eaters,
Are paid in gold to you!
And what ye owe was lent by creatures
Who pay the interest too!
Your shilling, Drones, is twice a shilling!
While our's is scarce a groat!
And we're unable and unwilling
To toil for less than nought.
What gain we by your vaunted acres,
And palaced meanness? Zounds!
One loaf for two at every baker's!
Twelve shillings for two pounds!
What will your wheat at Hamburgh bring you,
When we to trade forget?
And mortgagees for interest wring you?
Or sell for half the debt?

THOMAS.

Thou art not dead, my son! my son!
But God hath hence remov'd thee:
Thou canst not die, my buried boy,
While lives the sire who lov'd thee.
How canst thou die, while weeps for thee
The broken heart that bore thee;
And e'en the thought that thou art not
Can to her soul restore thee?
Will grief forget thy willingness
To run before thy duty?
The love of all the good and true,
That filled thine eyes with beauty?
Thy pitying grace, thy dear request,
When others had offended,
That made thee look as angels look,
When great good deeds are ended?
The strength with which thy soul sustain'd
Thy woes and daily wasting?
Thy prayer, to stay with us, when sure
That thou from us wast hasting?
And that last smile, which seem'd to say—
"Why cannot ye restore me?"
Thy look'd farewell is in my heart,
And brings thee still before me.
What though the change, the fearful change,
From thought, which left thee never,
To unremembering ice and clay,
Proclaim thee gone for ever?
Thy half-clos'd lids, thy upturn'd eyes,
Thy still and lifeless tresses;
Thy marble lip, which moves no more,
Yet more than grief expresses;
The silence of thy coffin'd snow,
By awed remembrance cherish'd;
These dwell with me, like gather'd flowers,
That in their April perish'd.
Thou art not gone, thou canst not go,
My bud, my blasted blossom!
The pale rose of thy faded face
Still withers in my bosom.
O Mystery of Mysteries,
That took'st my poor boy from me!
What art thou, Death? all-dreaded Death!
If weakness can o'ercome thee?
We hear thee not! we see thee not,
E'en when thy arrows wound us;
But, viewless, printless, echoless,
Thy steps are ever round us.
Though more than life a mystery
Art thou, the undeceiver,
Amid thy trembling worshippers
Thou seest no true believer.
No!—but for life, and more than life,
No fearful search could find thee:
Tremendous shadow! who is He
That ever stands behind thee?
The Power who bids the worm deny
The beam that o'er her blazes,
And veils from us the holier light
On which the seraph gazes,
Where burns the throne of Him, whose name
The sunbeams here write faintly;
And where my child a stranger stands
Amid the blest and saintly,

And sobs aloud—while in his eyes
The tears, o'erflowing, gather—
"They come not yet!—until they come,
Heav'n is not Heav'n, my Father!
Why come they not? why comes not she
From whom thy will removes me?
O does she love me—love me still?
I know my mother loves me!
Then send her soon! and with her send
The brethren of my bosom!
My sisters too! Lord, let them all
Bloom round the parted blossom!
The only pang I could not bear
Was leaving them behind me:
I cannot bear it. Even in heaven
The tears of parting blind me!"

BIGOTRY.

When calm minds strongly shoot into the night
Their shafts of lightning, no rous'd hamlet screams;
But darkness dies, pierced through and through with light,
That casts in silence round its useful beams.
Not so, when Zealots twang into the dark,
Flight after flight, their mischief-whizzing spears;
Though, thunder-winged, they hit or miss the mark,
They never fail to fire their own long ears,
Which blaze with splendour not to be endured,
Except by them whose barns and corn-ricks are insured.

SPENSERIAN.

From sordid thraldom, and a shameful ban,
Who hath redeem'd aspers'd Democracy?
King-loath'd Columbia's brave and wise old man.
Rejoice, O World!—God said, "Let Jackson be!"
And at his feet died swoll'n Monopoly!
Rejoice! his triumph saves no single state,
But every state; it saith—"Let trade be free!"
Lone Washington! another good and great,
Hath earn'd a deathless name—and every villain's hate.

THE SOLAND GOOSE.

Scotsmen! what Scotch Chalmers saith
Do ye devotely trust;
In God and nature put no faith,
But, childless, mix with dust.

Become extinct, ye noble race
Of Watt, and Bruce, and Burns!
That Paddy Whack may take your place,
And men make room for Kernes.

Die all unmarried, Englishmen!
So Chalmers bids ye die;
Become extinct! and then—What then?
Ask Looney Twalter's sty.

Daughters of Milton's mind and heart!
Will ye God's will approve?
No, call him Fool! bid bliss depart!
Reject earth's heav'n of love!

That men, who neither spin nor sow,
Of bread-tax'd crowds may tell!*
Confirm their league with crime and wo!
And make of earth a hell?

Famed Soland Goose! thy better name
Can ne'er be doubted more,
Since Chalmers wrote, for pence and fame,
What Malthus wrote before.

DON AND ROTHER.

Again we met, where often we have met,
Dear Rother! native Don!
We meet again, to talk, with vain regret,
Of deedless aims! and years remembered yet—
The past and gone!

We meet again—perchance to meet no more!
O Rivers of the heart!
I hear a voice, unvoyaged billows o'er,
Which bids me hasten to their pathless shore,
And cries, "Depart!"

"Depart!" it cries. "Why linger on the stage
Where virtues are veil'd crimes?
Have I not redd thee, even from youth to age?
Thou blotted book, with only one bright page!
Thy honest rhymes!

"Depart, pale Drone! What fruit-producing flower
Hast thou rear'd on the plain?
What useful moments count'st thou in thine hour?
What victim hast thou snatch'd from cruel power?
What tyrant slain?"

I will obey the power whom all obey.
Yes, Rivers of the heart!
O'er that blind deep, where morning casts no ray
To cheer the oarless wanderer on his way,
I will depart.

But first, O Rivers of my childhood! first
My soul shall talk with you;
For on your banks my infant thoughts were nurs'd;
Here from the bud the spirit's petals burst,
When life was new.

Before my fingers learn'd to play with flowers,
My feet through flowers to stray;
Ere my tongue lisp'd, amid your dewy bowers,
Its first glad hymn to Mercy's sunny showers,
And air, and day;

When, in my mother's arms, an infant frail,
Along your windings borne,
My blue eye caught your glimmer in the vale,
Where halcyons darted o'er your willows pale,
On wings like morn.

Ye saw my feelings round that mother grow,
Like green leaves round the root!
Then thought, with danger came, and flowered like wo!
But deeds, the fervent deeds that blush and glow,
Are Virtue's fruit.

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* What do the worthies, who restrict our food, intend by their emigration schemes, of which we hear so much? They intend to valve population down to the safety-point. They can neither see that their safety-valve costs more than it is worth; nor that, if they would let the efficiency of population keep pace with its numbers, no safety-valve could be needed

From infancy to youth; from schoolboy days,
When life with stones and flowers
Sports, like the stream that with the sunbeam plays,
Till age counts fearfully his numbered days—
We waste our powers.

What doth the man but what the child hath done?
We live, we talk, we move!
The best of all who prate beneath the sun;
The praised of all who smile, and talk, and run;
But live and love.

And if the best are like the useless gem
That shines in idle state;
Heavy, on those who crush the useful stem—
Heavy will fall the hand of God on them
Who live and hate!

Who bruise the weak, but bind no broken reed;
Who know not ruth nor shame;
Who, flowerless, ban the flower, to plant the weed;
And curse the toiling worms on whom they feed,
In God's great name!

Can I not crush them? No. Then, warning voice,
Teach me to welcome thee!
I cannot crush them. Let me then rejoice
Because thou call'st; and make my fate my choice—
Bound and yet free.

Is it not love, to loathe the loveless? Yea,
'Tis love like God's to man!
The love of angels for their God!—Away!
Such love alone repayeth those who pay—
No other can.

They love not God, who do not hate man's foes,
With hatred—not like mine—
But deep as Hell and blacker. To loathe those
Who blast the hope of freedom as it blows,
Is love divine.

Ah! many a blossom of the holy tree
Hath blossom'd but to fade!
Poland! the tears of nations flow for thee!
Thy bud of late redemption, Italy,
In dust is laid!

But hath no hope cheer'd man's despair since first
I trod thy margin, Don?
Yea, mighty links of evil's chain are burst;
And they who curse, and will not bless, accurs'd
Fall, one by one.

Though Poland bleeds where Kosciusko died,
Hark! truth-taught millions say,
To thrones, crime-sceptred, "Lo, you are defied!"
And, at my birth, Redemption's angel cried,
"America!"

Then, Rivers, tell my mother earth, I come
To slumber on her breast!
For, lo, my drooping thoughts refuse to bloom!
My spirit shakes its fetters. I crave room
For rest, for rest.

SPENSERIAN.

Spirit of British trade!—but thou, mean slave,
Whom vermin feed on, spirit none hast thou!—
O for the voice of Cromwell from the grave,
To ask why men, whose sires were free, allow
King-humbling Miscreancy to starve them now?—
Spirit of British Trade! thy merchant-kings
Should wear a crown of foolscap on their brow,
With this inscription: "Traffic's creeping things!
Where Beckford was a man, we are Dirt's underlings!"

FUNERAL HYMN.

Father! our brother's course is run,
And we bring home thy weary son;
No more he toils, no more he weeps;
And shall we mourn because he sleeps?

He thank'd thee, God of earth and sky,
For all that creep, and all that fly;
For weeds, that silent anthems raise,
And thoughts, that make their silence praise.

For every thorn and every flower!
For conquering Right and baffled Power;
For all the meek and all the proud,
He thank'd the Lord of sun and cloud.

For soul to feel and sight to see,
In all thy works, but types of thee;
For all thy works, and for thy word,
In life and death, he thank'd thee, Lord.

He thank'd thee too for struggles long;
For storms, that make the feeble strong;
For every pang thy goodness gave;
For hope deferr'd—and for the grave.

Oh, welcome in the morn, the road
That climbs to virtue's high abode!
But when descends the evening dew,
The inn of rest is welcome too.

Thou sayst to man, "Arise, and run
Thy glorious course, like yonder sun!"
But when thy children need repose,
Their Father's hand the curtain draws.

What though with eyes that yet can weep,
The sinner trembles into sleep?
Thou know'st he yet shall wake and rise
To gaze on Mercy's brightest skies.

The fearful child, though still caress'd,
Will tremble on his mother's breast,
But he, she knows, is safe from ill,
Though, watch'd by love, he trembles still.

Lord! when our brother wakes, may they,
Who watch beneath thy footstool, say,
"Another wanderer is forgiven!
Another child is born in heav'n!"

FLOWERS FOR THE HEART.

Flowers! winter flowers!—the child is dead,
The mother cannot speak:
O softly couch his little head,
Or Mary's heart will break!
Amid those curls of flaxen hair
This pale pink ribbon twine,
And on the little bosom there
Place this wan lock of mine.
How like a form in cold white stone,
The coffin'd infant lies!

Look, Mother, on thy little one!
And tears will fill thine eyes.
She cannot weep—more faint she grows,
More deadly pale and still:
Flowers! oh, a flower! a winter rose,
That tiny hand to fill.
Go, search the fields! the lichen wet
Bends o'er th' unfailing well;
Beneath the furrow lingers yet
The scarlet pimpernel.
Peeps not a snowdrop in the bower,
Where never froze the spring?
A daisy? Ah! bring childhood's flower!
The half-blown daisy bring!
Yes, lay the daisy's little head
Beside the little cheek;
O haste! the last of five is dead!
The childless cannot speak!

TO FANNY.

Britoness! angels love in thee
Angelic truth and piety;
But angels do not bow the knee
To God-defying homicides.

For others' woes thy bosom bleeds;
Deep is thy hate of hateful deeds;
But why of words, and forms, and creeds,
O why art thou the homager?

Does true religion war on mind?
Is pure religion deaf and blind?
They best serve God, who serve mankind;
Christ bade us feed his little ones.

O then contemn the base and cold!
Say to thy sons, "Be just and bold,
Unaw'd by power, unbribed by gold!"
Britoness! this is piety.

Thou bid'st me scorn this world of care;
"For better worlds," thou say'st, "prepare!"
Not I—if angel forms are there
Apologists of tyranny.

Where Milton's eyes, no longer dim,
See Seraphs walk with slander'd Pym,
I will not hear the cherubim
Sing Tory odes to Castlereagh.

A POET'S EPITAPH.

Stop, Mortal! Here thy brother lies,
The Poet of the Poor.
His books were rivers, woods, and skies,
The meadow, and the moor;
His teachers were the torn hearts' wail,
The tyrant, and the slave,
The street, the factory, the jail,
The palace—and the grave!
The meanest thing, earth's feeblest worm,
He fear'd to scorn or hate;
And honour'd in a peasant's form
The equal of the great.
But if he lov'd the rich who make
The poor man's little more,
Ill could he praise the rich who take
From plunder'd labour's store.
A hand to do, a head to plan,
A heart to feel and dare—
Tell man's worst foes, here lies the man
Who drew them as they are.

SONG.

Hard Lesson! cheap at any price,
And sternly taught to me:
That human nature's cowardice
Is man's worst enemy!
Pride spurns the fall'n, strength aids the strong;
And he who wrongs not suffers wrong,
Or bribes iniquity;
But let the weak seem arm'd and still,
And they will fawn, who else would kill.

EPIGRAM.

While Cobbett, who ne'er blush'd, is sometimes civil,
And blushing Bob's queer tricks would shame the devil;
Arthur alone is, in the genuine sense,
A specimen of fossil impudence,
Worthy of everlasting preservation,
To edify each future generation.

EPIGRAM.

When long, the drama, in a sordid age,
Had droop'd an exile; to the desert stage
Impassion'd nature, weeping as she smiled,
Led, by his trembling hand, her darling child:
Even from the worm's upstarted buried spleen,
While Shakspeare's dust, in transport murmur'd—
"Kean!"

THE DEATH-HUNTED.

Methought I wander'd long and far, and slept
On purple heath flowers, where a dark stream crept,
For ever young, along its bed of stone.
But soon before my troubled spirit pass'd,
A dream of unclimb'd hills, and forests vast,
And sea-like lakes, and shadowy rivers lone.

And there a man, whose youth seem'd palsied eld,
Mov'd faintly, though by famish'd death impell'd:
Lean was his cheek; yet beam'd his gentle eye,
With a calm sadness, on the mountains hoar,
And the magnificent flora, on the shore
Of waters, piled against his native sky.

And, "O," he said, "false hope, that truth-like seem'd!
I thought that toil might earn hard bread! I dream'd.
Who hath had sorrows and despair like mine?
Millions! to wander, or to perish, free!
Green Erin's dower! can lightnings blast like thee?
Cold Rapine! hath the wolf a tooth like thine?

"Farewell, my Country! and, oh, thank'd be thou,
Realm of the roaring surge, that part'st us now!

And, hail, ye pathless swamps, ye unsail'd floods!—
Thou owest nought, thou glittering snake, to me!
Hiss! if thou wilt! I ask not bread of thee!"
And then he plung'd into the night of woods.

The corpse-fed spectre, that had chas'd him o'er
Wo-freighted waves, stopp'd ere he reach'd the shore;
For a voice whisper'd from dim caves beneath,
"Thou may'st spare one, if millions are behind!
Turn then, and cleave the blissful western wind
Back to the grave of Hope, where Love is Death!"

LINES

WRITTEN AFTER SEEING, AT MR JOHN HEPPENSTALL'S OF UPPERTHORPE, NEAR SHEFFIELD, THE PLATES OF AUDUBON'S BIRDS OF AMERICA.

"Painting is silent music." So said one
Whose prose is sweetest painting.* Audubon!
Thou Raphael of great Nature's woods and seas!
Thy living forms and hues, thy plants, thy trees,
Bring deathless music from the houseless waste—
The immortality of truth and taste.
Thou giv'st bright accents to the voiceless sod;
And all thy pictures are mute hymns to God.
Why hast thou power to bear th' untravell'd soul
Through farthest wilds, o'er ocean's stormy roll;
And, to the prisoner of disease, bring home
The homeless birds of ocean's roaring foam;
But that thy skill might bid the desert sing
The sun-bright plumage of th' Almighty's wing?
With his own hues thy splendid lyre is strung;
For genius speaks the universal tongue.
"Come," cries the bigot, black with pride and wine—
"Come and hear *me*—the Word of God is mine!"
"But I," saith He, who paves with suns his car,
And makes the storms his coursers from afar,
And, with a glance of his all-dazzling eye,
Smites into crashing fire the boundless sky—
"I speak in this swift sea-bird's speaking eyes,
These passion-shiver'd plumes, these lucid dyes:
This beauty is my language! in this breeze
I whisper love to forests and the seas;
I speak in this lone flower—this dew-drop cold—
That hornet's sting—yon serpent's neck of gold:
These are my accents. Hear them! and behold
How well my prophet-spoken truth agrees
With the dread truth and mystery of these
Sad, beauteous, grand, love-warbled mysteries!"
Yes, Audubon! and men shall read in thee
His language, written for eternity;
And if, immortal in its thoughts, the soul
Shall live in heaven, and spurn the tomb's control,
Angels shall retranscribe, with pens of fire,
Thy forms of Nature's terror, love, and ire,
Thy copied words of God—when death-struck suns expire.

ELEGY ON WILLIAM COBBETT.

O bear him where the rain can fall,
And where the winds can blow!
And let the sun weep o'er his pall,
As to the grave ye go!

And in some little lone churchyard,
Beside the growing corn,
Lay gentle Nature's stern prose bard,
Her mightiest peasant-born!

Yes! let the wild-flower wed his grave,
That bees may murmur near,
When o'er his last home bend the brave,
And say—"A man lies here."

For Britons honour Cobbett's name,
Though rashly oft he spoke;
And none can scorn, and few will blame,
The low-laid heart of oak.

See, o'er his prostrate branches, see,
E'en factious hate consents
To reverence, in the fallen tree,
His British lineaments!

Though gnarl'd the storm-toss'd boughs that brav'd
The thunder's gather'd scowl,
Not always through his darkness raved
The storm-winds of the soul.

Oh, no! in hours of golden calm,
Morn met his forehead bold;
And breezy evening sung her psalm
Beneath his dew-dropp'd gold.

The wren its crest of fibred fire
With his rich bronze compared,
While many a youngling's songful sire
His acorn'd twiglets shared.

The lark, above, sweet tribute paid,
Where clouds with light were riven;
And true-love sought his blue-bell'd shade,
"To bless the hour of heav'n."

E'en when his stormy voice was loud,
And guilt quaked at the sound,
Beneath the frown that shook the proud
The poor a shelter found.

Dead Oak, thou liv'st! Thy smitten hands,
The thunder of thy brow,
Speak, with strange tongues, in many lands;
And tyrants hear thee NOW!

Beneath the shadow of thy name,
Inspired by thy renown,
Shall future patriots rise to fame,
And many a sun go down.

LINES

ON SEEING UNEXPECTEDLY A NEW CHURCH, WHILE WALKING, ON THE SABBATH, IN OLD-PARK WOOD, NEAR SHEFFIELD.

From Shirecliffe, o'er a silent sea of trees,
When evening waned o'er Wadsley's cottages,
I look'd on Loxley, Rivilin, and Don,
While at my side stood truth-lov'd Pemberton;*
And wondered, far beneath me, to behold
A golden spire, that glowed o'er fields of gold.

* Rousseau.

* The unequalled lecturer on the drama.

Out of the earth it rose, with sudden power,
A bright flame, growing heavenward, like a flower.
Where erst nor temple stood, nor holy psalm
Rose to the mountains in the day of calm.
There, at the altar, plighted hearts may sigh;
There, side by side, how soon their dust may lie!
Then carven stones the old, old tale will tell,
That saddens joy with its brief chronicle,
Till Time, with pinions stolen from the dove,
Gently erase the epitaph of love;
While rivers sing, on their unwearied way,
The songs that but with earth can pass away,
That brings the tempest's accents from afar,
And breathes of woodbines where no woodbines are!
Yet deem not that Affection can expire,
Though earth and skies shall melt in fervent fire;
For truth hath written, on the stars above—
"Affection cannot die, if God is Love!"
Whene'er I pass a grave with moss o'ergrown,
Love seems to rest upon the silent stone,
Above the wreck of sublunary things,
Like a tired angel sleeping on his wings.

RIBBLEDIN; OR THE CHRISTENING.

No name hast thou! lone streamlet
That lovest Rivilin.
Here, if a bard may christen thee,
I'll call thee "Ribbledin;"
Here, where first murmuring from thine urn,
Thy voice deep joy expresses;
And down the rock, like music, flows
The wildness of thy tresses.

Here, while beneath the umbrage
Of Nature's forest bower,
Bridged o'er by many a fallen birch,
And watch'd by many a flower,
To meet thy cloud-descended love,
All trembling, thou retirest—
Here will I murmur to thy waves
The sad joy thou inspirest.

Dim world of weeping mosses!
A hundred years ago,
Yon hoary-headed holly tree
Beheld thy streamlet flow:
See how he bends him down to hear
The tune that ceases never!
Old as the rocks, wild stream, he seems,
While thou art young for ever.

Wildest and lonest streamlet!
Gray oaks, all lichen'd o'er!
Rush-bristled isles! ye ivied trunks
That marry shore to shore!
And thou, gnarl'd dwarf of centuries,
Whose snak'd roots twist above me!
O for the tongue or pen of Burns,
To tell you how I love ye!

Would that I were a river,
To wander all alone
Through some sweet Eden of the wild,
In music of my own;
And bath'd in bliss, and fed with dew,
Distill'd o'er mountains hoary,
Return unto my home in heav'n
On wings of joy and glory!

Or that I were the lichen,
That, in this roofless cave,
(The dim geranium's lone boudoir,)
Dwells near the shadow'd wave,
And hears the breeze-bow'd tree-top's sigh,
While tears below are flowing,
For all the sad and lovely things
That to the grave are going!

O that I were a primrose,
To bask in sunny air!
Far, far from all the plagues that make
Town-dwelling men despair!
Then would I watch the building-birds,
Where light and shade are moving,
And lovers' whisper, and love's kiss,
Rewards the lov'd and loving!

Or that I were a skylark,
To soar and sing above,
Filling all hearts with joyful sounds,
And my own soul with love!
Then o'er the mourner and the dead,
And o'er the good man dying,
My song should come like buds and flowers,
When music warbles flying.

O that a wing of splendour,
Like yon wild cloud, were mine!
Yon bounteous cloud, that gets to give,
And borrows to resign!
On that bright wing, to climes of spring
I'd bear all wintry bosoms,
And bid hope smile on weeping thoughts,
Like April on her blossoms;

Or like the rainbow, laughing
O'er Rivilin and Don,
When misty morning calleth up
Her mountains, one by one,
While glistening down the golden broom,
The gem-like dew-drop raineth,
And round the little rocky isles
The little wave complaineth.

O that the truth of beauty
Were married to my rhyme!
That it might wear a mountain charm
Until the death of Time!
Then, Ribbledin! would all the best
Of Sorrow's sons and daughters
See Truth reflected in my song,
Like beauty on thy waters.

No longer, nameless streamlet,
That marriest Rivilin!
Henceforth, lone Nature's devotees
Would call thee "Ribbledin,"
Whenever, listening where thy voice
Its first wild joy expresses,
And down the rocks all wildly flows
The wildness of thy tresses.

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* The Bradfield parson will not let them.

THE MALTBY YEWS.

Fam'd Maltby Yews, with trunks like stone!
Are you or these gray rocks the older?
Like "death-in-life," ye strangely grow,
And, dead alive, they sternly moulder.

Memorials grand of death and life,
That seem from time new life to borrow!
Full many a race have ye outlived
Of men whose lives were crime and sorrow.

Age after age, while Time grew old,
Your writhen boughs, here, slowly lengthen'd;
Storm-stricken trees! your stormy strength
Five hundred years have darkly strengthen'd.
Yet safe beneath your mighty roots
The busy bee hath made its dwelling;
And, at your feet, the little mouse,
With lifted hands, its joy is telling.

And, high above the full-voiced lark,
The sun that loves to see you, beameth
On lonely rock or mossy trunk,
That with the rock coeval seemeth';
While, all around, the desert flowers,
Where breezes drink their freshness, gather,
As children come to kneel and bend
In prayer around their father's father.

O could I write upon your gloom
A solemn verse that would not perish,
My written thoughts should warn and bless,
And nations sav'd the precept cherish;
For I would bid the *dark* and *strong*
Be greatly good, and daily stronger,
That power to wrong, and will to wrong,
Like fiends divorced, might pair no longer.

BURNS.

That heaven's belov'd die early,
Prophetic Pity mourns;
But old as Truth, although in youth,
Died giant-hearted Burns.

O that I were the daisy
That sank beneath his plough,
Or, "neighbour meet," that "skylark sweet!"
Say, are they nothing now?

That mouse, "our fellow mortal,"
Lives deep in Nature's heart;
Like earth and sky, it cannot die
Till earth and sky depart.

Thy Burns, child-honour'd Scotland!
Is many minds in one;
With thought on thought, the name is fraught,
Of glory's peasant son.

Thy Chaucer is thy Milton,
And might have been thy Tell;
As Hampden fought, thy Sidney wrote,
And would have fought as well.

Be proud, man-childed Scotland!
Of earth's unpolished gem;
And "Bonny Doon," and "heaven aboon,"
For Burns hath hallowed them.

Be proud, though sin dishonour'd,
And grief baptized thy child;
As rivers run, in shade and sun,
He ran his courses wild.

Grieve not, though savage forests
Look'd grimly on the wave,
Where dim-eyed flowers and shaded bowers
Seem'd living in the grave.

Grieve not, though, by the torrent,
Its headlong course was riven,
When o'er it came, in clouds and flame,
Niagara from heaven!

For sometimes gently flowing,
And sometimes chafed to foam,
O'er slack and deep, by wood and steep,
He sought his heavenly home.

THE TRICOLOR CROSS.

PARODIED FROM BERANGER'S "CROSS OF THE LEGION OF HONOUR."

Thou took'st thy deep blue from the eyes of the soul,
And thy white from the foam of the far rolling sea;
But, Cross of the Billows! fam'd far as they roll,
Why stain thy bright red with the blood of the free?
Columbia beheld thee flaunt over her slain,
When she call'd up the ghosts of Pym, Hampden, and Vane;
And steep'd were thy folds in the blood of her brave,
When France broke her chain, to dig tyrants a grave.

Fam'd Red Cross of England, famed ever to be!
Bright Cross of the Tricolor! when wilt thou wave,
A meteor in darkness, from sea unto sea—
The symbol of justice, the hope of the slave?
Where, where wast thou waving when Poland arose,
Crying "God for Sarmatia!" to Liberty's foes?
Oh, not o'er the ranks of the sworn-to-be-free,
Stained Cross of the Ocean, stain'd ever to be!

Stain'd ever?—No, Ocean! thy Tricolor Cross
Shall yet shame the Tricolor dreadfully fair;
Through the ranks of th' oppressor its brightness shall toss
Defiance and havoc, defeat and despair;
O'er the treason of priests, the rebellion of kings,
Our halcyon shall rise, with thy blue on his wings,
And sport with the billows wherever they roll,
Bright, bright as heav'n's depth in the eyes of the soul.

THE PILGRIM FATHERS.

A voice of grief and anger—
Of pity mix'd with scorn—
Moans o'er the waters of the west,
Through fire and darkness borne;
And fiercer voices join it—
A wild triumphant yell!
For England's foes, on ocean slain,
Have heard it where they fell.

What is that voice which cometh
Athwart the spectred sea?
The voice of men who left their homes
To make their children free;

Of men whose hearts were torches
For Freedom's quenchless fire;
Of men, whose mothers brave brought forth
The sire of Franklin's sire.

They speak!—the Pilgrim Fathers
Speak to ye from their graves!
For earth hath muttered to their bones
That we are soulless slaves!
The Bradfords, Carvers, Winslows,
Have heard the worm complain,
That less than men oppress the men
Whose sires were Pym and Vane!

What saith the voice which boometh
Athwart th' upbraiding waves?
"Though slaves are ye, our sons are free,
Then why will you be slaves?
The children of your fathers
Were Hampden, Pym, and Vane!"
Land of the sires of Washington,
Bring forth such men again!

A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE.

An old man, to the field of graves
Borne, in his parish-shroud, methought,
Found, in the land of landless slaves,
The bed of rest, which long he sought.

But, after many years had flown,
That old man rose out of his grave,
And wondered at his native town,
And found no honest man a slave.

Where once that town of trouble stood,
And he the tyrant's frown had felt,
Men, in sweet homes, by stream and wood,
Amid their own green acres dwelt.

Nor hovel now, nor temple was,
Where hovels once and temples stood;
All, all had perish'd! for, alas!
Redemption had been steep'd in blood!

Remote, an engined city groan'd
Where bad men toiled in penal gloom;
The Agnews there the Pelhams moan'd,
The Melvilles plied the penal loom.

Tyrants, not victims, justly bound
To labour's chain, alone were slaves:
And no good man was landless found
In this sad land, where men have graves.

But things which penal toil had wrought,
Converting crime itself to good,
The blessings of all climates brought
To those sweet homes, by stream and wood.

Instinct with life, almost they seem'd
And came and went, when call'd or sent
By tranquil thought, that star-like beam'd
On each untiring instrument.

Not only by his toiling hands,
But chiefly by his god-like mind,
Man, sowing bliss, in distant lands,
Made earth a garden for mankind.

THE BALLOT.

The sky had no voice, and the ocean was still—
A power and a terror chained valley and hill;
For the spirit of Burns, upon thunder-clouds borne,
Looked down on his country in pity and scorn;
Because the descendants of Wallace were slow,
The bonds they had loosened to break at a blow.

"What! give back their souls to these freemen enthralled?
Then give them the Ballot!" o'er Scotland he called;
"Concede it, proud traitors! obtain it, thou thrall—
Thou robbed of the land which the Lord made for all!
Obtain it, ye millions, who labour for drones!
Concede it, ye despots, who feast on their groans!"

The Lords of Misrule and their Master turned pale;
The tyrant-eyed viper seem'd weak as the snail;
The bones of the murder'd for freedom came forth
From their far-severed graves, with a growl like the north;*
Of millions awaking the murmur was deep;
And the face of the bard was like lightning asleep.

So hovers the eagle o'er summits of light,
Which, touch'd by his shadow, start up in affright;
While, girt by the peaks where the storm sinks to rest,
Loch Oich sees Ben Nevis sink down in the west,
When o'er the dark glare of the sky-painted lake,
Frown Coryuragen and Coriaraick.†

ROCH ABBEY GATEWAY.

What dost thou here, lorn Ireland's dying daughter?
These holy walls, that erst, with open door,
Welcom'd the pilgrim—offering bread and water,
Prayer, rest, and counsel, to the way-worn poor—
Now mute and barren as the manless moor,
Would not, to Christ himself, afford a crumb!
Perish, unheard, thou spurned of lord and boor!
Poor Erin's waif! be Supplication dumb
Where Charity is deaf. At hallowed gates
Hop'st thou for succour? Outcast! over them
Mourns ivied Ruin; or, within them, waits
Obstruction, loop'd and ring'd with gold and gem;
And Mammon, plotting wo to harpied states,
Scowls from beneath his cloven diadem.
Fair was she, and her famish'd child was like her;
Nought lovelier mourns beneath the laughing skies.
As I approach'd, I saw the baby strike her; ‡
It *raged* for food, while tears gushed from her eyes!
Why did she marry, in the land of sighs,
Where crimes, call'd laws, made by the lawless, named
Her child "Benoni?" Let the basely wise
Say, rather, why, self-dup'd and unashamed,

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* The martyrs, Muir, Palmer, Skirving, Gerald, and Margarot, all died in exile, except the latter, who perished for want of bread in London!!!

† Two mountains of Scotland near the source of the Ness.

‡ "I saw a baby beat its dying mother;
I had starv'd the one, and was starving the other."
COLERIDGE.

They curse God's blessings; and, with blasphemies,
Hallow the arrow at our vitals aim'd,
Lauding the madness that makes precious things,
Yea, things most precious, worthless! Heav'n is blam'd,
And hope and action droop their palsied wings,
Because our lords are breadtax-eating kings.

LEAVES AND MEN.

Drop, drop into the grave, Old Leaf,
Drop, drop into the grave;
Thy acorn's grown, thy acorn's sown—
Drop, drop into the grave.
Decembers tempest's rave, Old Leaf,
Above thy forest-grave, Old Leaf;
Drop, drop into the grave!

The birds, in spring, will sweetly sing
That death alone is sad;
The grass will grow, the primrose shew
That death alone is sad.
Lament above thy grave, Old Leaf;
For what has life to do with grief?
'Tis death alone that 's sad.

What then? We two have both lived through
The sunshine and the rain;
And bless'd be he, to me and thee,
Who sent his sun and rain!
We've had our sun and rain, Old Leaf,
And God will send again, Old Leaf,
The sunshine and the rain.

Race after race of leaves and men,
Bloom, wither, and are gone;
As winds and waters rise and fall,
So life and death roll on;
And long as ocean heaves, Old Leaf,
And bud and fade the leaves, Old Leaf,
Will life and death roll on.

How like am I to thee, Old Leaf!
We'll drop together down;
How like art thou to me, Old Leaf!
We'll drop together down.
I'm gray and thou art brown, Old Leaf!
We'll drop together down, Old Leaf,
We'll drop together down!

Drop, drop into the grave, Old Leaf,
Drop, drop into the grave;
Thy acorn's grown, thy acorn's sown—
Drop, drop into the grave.
December's tempests rave, Old Leaf,
Above thy forest grave, Old Leaf;
Drop, drop into the grave!

SONG.

They tax our bread, they eat our souls,
They brutalize despair;
They mock the victims they embrute,
And cry, "What beasts they are!"
Their talk is still of guns and swords;
But soon their pride shall see,
We need no swords to conquer slaves,
And set the tyrants free.

That slaves they are, and beggars too,
By statute they declare;
Rascals by act of Parliament!
Behold what beasts they are!
Their hearts, ring'd round with ignorance,
Are fetter'd to disdain;
Fraud jails their souls, and meanness links
Their lusts to Folly's chain.

We bought my Lord the hat he wears,
We bought his lady's gown;
We bought the squire his coach and four;
But wish he'd use his own.
Arms! Let them prate of gun and lance!
Nor gun nor lance need we:—
What! turn our fetters into swords?
No—set our tyrants free!

Oh, would they swap, for honest bread,
The chains they forge and wear,
From heav'n, to visit man on earth,
The angels would repair!
But soon our light shall teach their gloom
What mind can do and be;
We'll forge no fetters into swords,
But set our tyrants free.

SATAN'S WISDOM.

A Heaven for lords is Britain,
The land of toil and famine;
In England men work hard for scorn,
In Ireland men are clamming.
If Hell itself were Britain,
Could worse than this be said?
If devils were lords in England,
They could but tax our bread.

Toil'd England! breadless Erin!
Your spoilers prate of Poland!
They talk of Russia's acred slaves
To helots who have no land!
They could but starve their feeders,
And call the fetter'd free,
If the knout were Britain's sceptre,
Abhorr'd from sea to sea!

In hopeless pain we labour
For more saints than Saint Monday;
We toil for scorn six days in seven,
And Agnew's bill for Sunday;
If William 's the Reformer,
Can this be truly said?
The Devil 's not King of England;
And yet they tax our bread!

There 's bread enough for Britain,
Had Britain leave to barter;
We're free to make, but not to sell!
Is this Great William's charter?
Or have the Rodens chang'd him
For Graham's soft woollen head?
If Peel were King of England,
He could but tax our bread.

Who rob white slaves that black ones
May still have thane-like masters?
Who soothe white slaves with ninefold pangs,
That bring them shrouds for plaisters?

If we were cold as Stanley,
With hearts of Humber stone,
And devils were lords in England,
They would not curse their own.

We're all free to be honest;
Is Pelham free to cheat us?
We're free to toil for lords and squires,
And they are free to eat us;
O William, the Reformer!
Shall this be truly said?
If the Devil were King of England,
He would not tax our bread!

He is too wise a rascal
To kill the fools who feed him,
And, through their bellies and their backs,
Teach slaves they need not heed him;
He knows they like to honour
The Altar and the Throne;
And, while he eats the mutton,
He will not tax the bone!

WILLIAM.

"Lift, lift me up! my broken heart
Must speak before I go:
O Mother! it is *death* to part
From you—I love you so!

"The doctor shunn'd my eyes, and brook'd
Few words from my despair;
But through and through his heart I look'd,
And saw my coffin there.

"*You* did not tell me I should die,
You fear'd your child would grieve;
But I *am* dying! One is nigh
Whom kindness can't deceive.

"To make my will and bid adieu,
Before I pass away,
Few hours are mine; and short and few
The words I wish to say.

"My angel-aunts, I hope, will take
A little gift from me;
So let them cherish for my sake,
My 'Pennant's Zoology.'

"My pencil-case must not be lost,
'Twas giv'n me by a brother;
I give it her who loves me most:
You will not lose it, mother.

"Ere summer came, I hoped, in God,
I should a-fishing go:
Let Henry have my fishing-rod—
He loves to fish, you know.

"Give him my reel, my gimp, my lines,
My flies with silk moss'd o'er;
Again the lilied summer shines,
But I shall fish no more.

"Edwin and Francis never can
By these poor eyes be seen;
Kiss both for me—give this to Ann,
And this to Mary Green.

"Henry and Fanny—Noah, John,
Ebby and Benjamin,
Are all at home; so, one by one,
Dear mother, bring them in.

"I have not much to leave behind,
But what I earn'd I have;
For well you taught my willing mind,
That Spend-all is a slave.

"You have the keys of both my locks,
That keep my little store,
Just forty pounds are in my box;
My father owes me four.

"When I am gone, among them all
Divide it as is fit;
I'm sorry 'tis a sum so small—
But God bless them and it!

"The dim light sickens round my bed,
Your looks seem sick with wo,
The air feels sick, as, o'er my head,
Its pantings come and go.

"Oh, I am sick in every limb,
Sick, sick in every vein!
My eyes and brain with sickness swim,
My bones are sick with pain!

"What is this weary helplessness,
This breathless toil for breath?
This tossing aching weariness—
What is it?—It is Death!

"Mother, I feel as in a dream;
My dark'ning senses reel,
Like moonlight on a troubl'd stream:
This cannot last, I feel.

"Yet, it *has* lasted—Oh, how long
This sick dream seems to me!
My God! why is my weakness strong
To bear such agony?

"'Tis sad to quit a world so fair,
To warm young hearts like mine;
And, doom'd so early, hard to bear
This heavy hand of thine.

"I, like a youngling from the nest,
By rude hands torn away,
Would fain cling to my mother's breast—
But cannot, must not, stay.

"From her and her's, and our sweet home,
My soul seems forced afar,
O'er frozen seas of sable foam,
Through gloom without a star.

"I go where voice was never heard,
Where sunbeam ne'er was seen,
Where dust beholds nor flow'r nor bird,
As if life ne'er had been!

"I go where Thomas went before;
I hear him sob 'Prepare!'
And I have borne what Thomas bore:
Who knows what he can bear?

"Farewell!—farewell! to *meet* again!
But, oh, why *part* to meet?
I know my mother's heart is fain
To share my winding sheet!

"Can't you die with me, mother? Come
And clasp me!—not so fast!
How close and airless is the room!
O mother!"—It is past!

The breath is gone, the soul is flown,
The lips no longer move;
God o'er my child hath slowly thrown
His veil of dreadful love.

O thou chang'd dust! pale form that tak'st
All hope from fond complaint!
Thou sad mute eloquence, that mak'st
The listener's *spirit* faint.

And, oh, ye dreamy fears, that rest
On dark realities!*
Why preach ye to the trembling breast,
Truths which are mysteries?

BAWL BRAWL HALL.

Our neighbour Tim sings small,
When Betty brews a brawl;
And praying means a squall,
At Bawl Brawl Hall.
But Tim sings not at all,
When Betty bawls her bawl,
And the little stream runs trembling
By Bawl Brawl Hall.

All silent are the bats,
All mute the wawling cats,
When Betty scares the rats
At Bawl Brawl Hall:
Tim, wishing he were hung,
Says, "This old peal's well rung!"
While startled owls turn, shrieking,
From Bawl Brawl Hall.

Right happy near to be,
The devil shouts with glee,
"By God! they don't want me
At Bawl Brawl Hall."
Tim sighs like barming beer,
Till morning comes, to hear
The curtain lecture ending,
At Bawl Brawl Hall.

SONG.

We see the drunkard's wither'd thighs,
His greenish cheeks, his jaundic'd eyes;
We hear his wife's yell'd agonies,
That hang his lips with rabid foam;
But have not seen, all stripp'd and bare,
The filth and squalor which they share,
The naked heart of his despair,
The horrors of her hopeless home.

To him corruption's pandars preach;
Their lore to him our Wortleys teach;
He shouts for Shark, he fights for Leech,
He drinks for every jobber's job.
By men like him are States betrayed,
And toil is robb'd, and rogues are paid;
Of such materials mobs are made;
And tyrants often want a mob.

Our dogs are sober!—Men were they
Who yell'd for drink and sabre-sway,
When Priestly, in hell's festal day,
Amid their fires, a martyr stood?
Such tools again our lords will need,
If drones shall thrive and nations bleed:
Slaves! ye of tyrants are the seed,
That fastest grows when steep'd in blood!

THE STARVATION-VALVE.

The Incarnate Fiend of Selfishness!
Whom other names men call,
Where drones tax Labour's hard-earn'd crust,
And thieves are lords of all;
"Preserve," saith he, "all beastly things,
But throw your *men* away!
The bonny men, the strong young men,
With faces bright as day!"

Abaddon's High Priest! he hath curs'd
All ages and all climes,
Still making, ever-gathering,
The harvest of their crimes;
He feedeth on the souls of men,
He turneth light to gloom;
All maw he is, a living hearse,
An omnipresent tomb.

"A power," he saith, "dwells westward hence,
Between the sea and sky;
His kindred are the winds and clouds,
And things that swim and fly;
He loves to feed on bonny men,
Where sea-snakes dive and swim;
All maw he is—a grave, like me—
Send, send your men to him."

Ay, send them to the dolphin's home,
In that perfidious barque,
Built in th' eclipse of Britain's mind,
And rigged with curses dark:
Dupes! cherish still all brutal things,
But fling your men away!
The bonny men, the strong young men,
With faces bright as day!

SONG.

TUNE.—"*Mary's Dream.*"

Mother! I come from God and bliss;
O bless me with a mother's kiss!
Though dead, I spurn the tomb's control,
And clasp thee in th' embrace of soul.
No terrors daunt, no cares annoy,
No tyrants vex thy buried boy;
Why mourn for him who smiles on thee?
Dear Mother! weep no more for me.

Where angels dwell—in glen and grove—
I sought the flowers which *Mothers* love;
And in my garden I have set
The primrose and the violet:
For thee, the wo-mark'd cowslip grows,
For thee, the little daisy blows;
When wilt thou come my flowers to see?
Nay, Mother! weep no more for me.

Christ's Mother wept on earth for him,
When wept in heaven the Seraphim,
And, o'er the Eternal Throne, the light
Grew dim, and sadden'd into night;
But where through bliss heaven's rivers run,
That Mother now is with her Son;

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* Opium-eater.

They miss me there, and wait for thee—
Come Mother, come! why weep for me?

I set a rose our home beside—
I know the poor memorial died;
The frost hath chipp'd my letter'd stone;
My very name from earth is gone!
But in my bower, that knows not wo,
The wild hedge-rose and woodbine glow,
And red-breasts sing of home to me:
Come, Mother, come! we wait for thee.

SONG.

Man-like her lover was to see,
But stern and cold of soul was he,
Of cold and sordid kindred born;
And when he found the maid was poor,
He pass'd in scorn her decent door,
He dug her grave with scorn.

Unstained as vernal snow, she died;
Like snow, that melts on Rother's side,
When April's sun in trouble sets:
Her life was but a day of showers;
And, oh, it closed o'er songless bowers,
And drooping violets!

FOOTPATHS.

Wolves, with the hearts of devils!
They steal our footpaths too!
The poor man's walk they take away,
The solace of his only day,
Where now, unseen, the flowers are blowing,
And, all unheard, the stream is flowing!
What worse could devils do?

In solitude unbroken,
Where rill and river glide,
The lover's elm, itself a grove,
Laments the absent voice of love;
How bless'd I oft sat there with Fanny,
When tiny Jem, and little Annie,
Were fairies at my side!

O dew-dropp'd rose! O woodbine!
They close the bowery way,
Where oft my father's father strayed,
And with the leaves and sunbeams play'd,
Or, like the river by the wild wood,
Ran with that river, in his childhood,
The gayest child of May!

Where little feet o'er bluebells,
Pursued the sun-bless'd bee,
No more the child-lov'd daisy hears
The voice of childhood's hopes and fears;
Thrush! never more, by thy lone dwelling,
Where fountain'd vales thy tale are telling,
Will childhood startle thee?

Wolves, with hearts of devils!
Their country's shame and curse!
The poor man's path they take away,
His solace on the Sabbath day;
The sick heart's dewy path of roses,
Where day's eye lingers ere it closes!
Could hell's worst fiends do worse?

TO HOFLAND, THE ARTIST.

Go, Bard and Painter! to the desert. Limn
The mountain's soul, and bid that spirit stay.
So shall thy canvass be a glowing hymn
To God in his great works; sung every day
By every eye that sees it with the heart,
While age-long years grow gray, and rock-built pomps depart.

ON A HEARTLESS SLANDERER.

"The unco guid" should pray with tears,
That thou may'st live a thousand years,
To hunt out flaws, and snarl, and laugh,
And then write Virtue's epitaph.

EPIGRAM.

Life is short, and time is swift,
Roses fade, and shadows shift;
But the ocean and the river
Rise and fall and flow for ever:
Bard! not vainly heaves the ocean;
Bard! not vainly flows the river;
Be thy song then like their motion,
Blessing now, and blessing ever.

A POET.

Child of the Hopeless! two hearts broke
When thou wast orphan'd here:
They left a treasure in thy breast,
The soul of Pity's tear.
And thou must be—not what thou wilt;—
Say then, what would'st thou be?
"A Poet!" Oh, if thou would'st steep
Deep thoughts in ecstasy,

Nor poet of the rich be thou,
Nor poet of the poor;
Nor harper of the swarming town,
Nor minstrel of the moor;
But be the bard of all mankind,
The prophet of all time,
And tempt the saints in heav'n to steal
Earth's truth-created rhyme.

Be the Columbus of a world
Where wisdom knows not fear;
The Homer of a race of men
Who need not sword and spear.
God in thy heart, and God in thee,
If thou to men canst shew,
Thou makest mortals angels here,
Their home a heav'n below.

Upon a rock thou sett'st thy feet,
And callest Death thy slave:
"Here lies a man!" Eternity
Shall write upon thy grave;
"A Bard lies here!—O softly tread,
Ye never-wearied years!
And bless, O World, a memory
Immortal as thy tears!"

MALTHUS AND PADDY.

Why, faded wretch, that stoop'st like age,
Art thou so gray and lean?
"My husband hates and starves us all;
He married at sixteen."
Well, I shall wed; I'm twenty-nine,
And Bess is twenty-three;
Yon long red row, blue-slated o'er,
It all belongs to me;
And Bess has saved a hundred pounds;
She must—she's twenty-three.

Why dost thou toil, poor dwindled lad,
Twelve hours for pennies three?
"My father married, when a boy,
My mother young as he;
And times are hard, for work is scarce;
We're eight, sir—five and three."
O Love! young Love! would'st thou but wait
For red ripe twenty-three,
How soon would wealth, how soon would pride,
Doff low their hats to thee,
And *beg* to hire thy boys and girls!
Wait, maids, for twenty-three.

Why begg'st thou, man, thou'rt strong for toil,
And work there is for thee.
"The Irish come by thousands, sir."*
Then say how that can be?
"They breed like rats, and come by steam;
There is no work for me."
O Pat! kind Pat! would'st thou but wait
For manly twenty-nine,
Nor unfed hind, nor tax-fed lord
Would curse a son of thine!
If men are scarce when youth is wise,
Wait, Pat, for twenty-nine.

THE SINLESS CAIN.

A BALLAD.

What is that flesh-bound spectre,
Whose thoughts none understand?
The sleeping mastiff heareth
The shunn'd of every land.
The spirit in his famish'd eyes,
Seems bare to sun and sky;
And insolence grows mad with pride,
When that sad form comes nigh.

In every clime and country
There lives a man of pain,
Whose nerves, like chords of lightning,
Bring fire into his brain;
To him a whisper is a wound,
A look or sneer a blow;
More pangs he feels in years or months
Than dunce-throng'd ages know.

Yet Pity speaks, like Hatred,
Of him where'er he goes;
As if his soul were marble,
Men polish it with woes.

Though soft and warm as "weeping blood,"
And true, his heart, as truth,
They coffin winter in his thoughts,
And crown with snow his youth.

He drinks the wine of curses,
He eats reproach for bread,
The fire unblown of slander
Is flame upon his head:
So, in to-morrow's unmade grave,
He counts life's heavy hours;
While rancour makes his bed of snakes,
And mockery calls them flowers.

Amid the bless'd a stranger,
Or foodless with his mate;
From home and hope an exile,
Or paid for love with hate;
All lonely by some throng'd fireside,
Or homeless in his home;
Well may he wish to herd with wolves,
Or marry ocean's foam.

"Why was I given in marriage?"
Said Love, when he was born:
Behold him! the Benoni
Of glory's natal morn!
The mind of man shall be his shroud;
His life is deathless death;
Bleach'd on the surge of endless years,
He sighs—and hath no breath.

Why marvel that his spirit
Seems dry as dead men's bones?
That maidens fear his gestures,
And start to hear his tones?
Why marvel that, with maniac steps,
He moveth fast and slow,
If he was call'd a man of grief
Six thousand years ago?

By Babylonian rivers,
In Israel's dreadful day,
With soul bow'd like the willows,
For prostrate Solyma,
He, saddest, sweetest bard of all
Whom God's dark wing had swept
From pride into captivity,
Remembering Zion, wept.

Ere Rome was, he wrote ballads
On Troy, the fate-o'erthrown;
And he will sigh for London,
In manless ruin strown;
Then o'er Australia, hungering,
Poor waif of land and sea,
Ask bread through alleys yet unbuilt,
Where London is to be.

Or from some Pandour'd palace,
That looks o'er slaves afar,
Say to his royal legions—
"Go tame the earth with war!"
That unborn scribes may write again
The tale of chain'd or free,
Unless mankind, meantime, recant
Their blood-idolatry.

Behold him! say what art thou
Whose thoughts none understand?
The sleeping mastiff hears thee,
Thou scorn'd of every land.

* If misrule in Ireland is to continue, Englishmen and Scotsmen must refuse to marry, and become extinct; or consent, like the Irish, to live on the lowest food that will sustain nature.

Famine, that laid thy vitals bare
To wind, and sun, and sky,
Sees nothing sadder than thy cheek,
Or wilder than thine eye.

What art thou? Did thy boyhood
Cull shells on Severn's side?
Art thou "the wondrous stripling
That perish'd in his pride?"
Or art thou he whom wonder call'd
The Avonian's youthful peer,
The second Shakspeare? Bread! O Bread!
Poor Otway!—it is here.

Thou changest—Art thou Dante,
The famed in peace and war,
Whom weeps ungrateful Florence,
Beneath her mournful star?
Then hast thou known "how sad the sound
Of feet on strangers' stairs—
How bitter strangers' bread" to him
Who eats it, and despairs!

What! Canning! scoundrel-murder'd,
And musing still with fools!
Who would not be a genius,
To manage harpies' tools!
Who would not soothe a State to shield
A harpy-bullied Throne?
And die, consum'd in fire from heav'n,
By palaced-beggars blown?

Thou changest—Trampled Hargraves!
Rejoin thy nameless dust;
Not even to the lifeless
Will cruel man be just.
Changed! thought-worn Crompton! thy sad face
Casts gloom on cloudless day;
Fool, even in death! why linger here,
Trade's meek reproach?—away!

Stay'st thou, amid the fortunes
Which thy scorned genius made,
To hear a Peel or Arkwright
Cry, "Manacles for trade?"
Or can it please thy pensive soul
To meet an upstart's eye,*
And see the reptile stalk erect,
A wealth-rewarded lie?

Thou changest—Art thou Byron,
Who barter'd peace for stone?
And *did'st* thou wed a shadow,
To perish all alone?
Chang'd! Art thou he, once many-thron'd,
Who wifeless, soulless, died,
While son and wife, walk'd, clad in smiles,
His paltry foe beside!

Again thou changest. Sad one!
How want-worn is thine hand!
No diadem *thou* wearest,
Thou scorn'd of every land!
The eagle in thy famish'd eyes,
Looks faintly on the sky;
And insult waxeth red with rage,
When thy pale form draws nigh.

* Think of a grandchild of Crompton going to a Peel or an Arkwright, or other dung-hill-sprung breadtax-eater, for parish pay!

SONG.

This is law all England o'er—
Palaced pauper's law I guess:
Less they give for more and more—
More they want for less and less.
This is law all England o'er—
Palaced pauper's law, I guess:
Wheat to day and roots to-morrow,
Harder work for deeper sorrow.

Work for idlers, or we sin;
Day and night, rob board and bed;
Work, and give the Sunday in—
Nine days' work for three days' bread!
Wrong is right—they make it so;
This is wrong, full well we know:
Wealth for sloth—for labour sorrow;
Roots to-day and salt to-morrow.

Law for us is law for them;
If we prove it, we rebel;
Us and our's they soon condemn,
If we bring less work to sell.
Law for us is law for them;
If we prove it we rebel—
Nine day's wages! "Hey, Saint Monday!"
Work three days—rest three, and Sunday!

"Land's the state, and land's betray'd"—
We're the State, if fraud's undone—
"Would ye ruin England's trade?"
We can starve when trade is gone.
"If ye strike, ye ruin trade!"
You can starve when we're undone—
"Whip that dog! Hark, how the hound yells!"
See the rascals! cry the scoundrels!*

* I neither defend the Trades' Unionists nor the Parliamentary conspirators against the public purse: they both play for destruction; but the former have, in the example of the latter, an abominable apology. The landowners restrict food, expecting the price of two loaves for one; the workmen, in self-defence, restrict labour. If our trade perish, let the guilty tremble!

EPISTLE TO G. C. HOLLAND, ESQ., M.D.,

WITH MRS LOUDON'S "PHILANTHROPIC ECONOMY," OR "THE PHILOSOPHY OF HAPPINESS."

Doctor, I send you, with this scrawl,
A thing by no means common;
For, by the Power that made us all,
I send—a perfect woman!

I do not praise her cheek's rich hue,
Her dress, her air of fashion;
I say not that the soul's deep blue
Melts in her eye of passion;

But I commend her to the heart
On which your own reposes,
Because her stern worth can impart
A grace like rain on roses;

And teach parental flowers to teach
The love of gainful duty
To every plant within her reach,
And all their buds of beauty.

The meek-tress'd angel of your home
May take to her own bosom
Thoughts bright and pure as ocean's foam,
And fresh as morning's blossom.

Nor need she dread a rival's look,
Or hate a rival's merit:
I send—a woman in a book!
A world-awaking spirit!

A charm! a host! a scourge! a sting
By tyrants seen with sadness!
A truth-taught POWER! whose mental wing
Shall smite them into madness!

Oh, thanks to Loudon and to thee,
Sword-breaking might of letters!
Enfranchized woman shall set free
The slave who forged her fetters!

For Truth is freedom unto those
Whose souls have strength to seize her;
They play a game which none can lose,
Who seek her

EBENEZER.

THE RIGHTS OF DESPOTS.

Rights?—Men who make their being
A nuisance to mankind?
Shall such wrong-doers talk of rights,
And, when they seek them, find?

Their deeds say "fraud is justice!"
Will God such fraud forgive?
What rights have they whose law of wrong
Denies our right to live?

It calls the sun a libel;
The skies an evil scroll;
Turns truth to falsehood, and unseals
The charter of the soul.

Sun-written name of Mercy!
Hast thou their guilt forgiven?
Then, Justice, thy sun-written name
Is but a blot in heaven!

THE BROKEN HEART.

Stop, passenger! for I am weak,
And heavy are my falling feet—
Stop! till I gather strength to speak:
Twice have I seen thee cross the street,
Where wo and wild-flowers seldom meet.

O give a pallid flower to her
Who ne'er again will see one grow!
Give me a primrose, passenger!
That I may bless it ere I go
To my false love, in death laid low.

Sweet—sweet! it breathes of Rother's bowers,
Where, like the stream, my childhood play'd;
And, happy as the birds and flowers,
My love and I together strayed,
Far from the dim town's deadly shade.

Why did he leave my mother's cot?
My days of trouble then began:
I followed—but he knew me not!
The strippling had become a man!
And now in heaven he waits for Ann.

Back from consumption's streeted gloom,
To death's green fields, I fain would fly;
In yon churchyard there is no room
For broken-hearted flowers to sigh,
And look on heaven before they die.

SATURDAY.

To-morrow will be Sunday, Ann—
Get up, my child, with me;
Thy father rose at four o'clock
To toil for me and thee.

The fine folks use the plate he makes,
And praise it when they dine;
For John has taste—so we'll be neat,
Altho' we can't be fine.

Then let us shake the carpet well,
And wash and scour the floor,
And hang the weather-glass he made
Beside the cupboard-door.

And polish thou the grate, my love;
I'll mend the sofa arm;
The autumn winds blow damp and chill;
And John loves to be warm.

And bring the new white curtain out,
And string the pink tape on—
Mechanics should be neat and clean:
And I'll take heed for John.

And brush the little table, child,
And fetch the ancient books—
John loves to read; and, when he reads,
How like a king he looks!

And fill the music-glasses up
With water fresh and clear;
To-morrow, when he sings and plays,
The *street* will stop to hear.

And throw the dead flowers from the vase,
And rub it till it glows;
For in the leafless garden yet
He'll find a winter rose.

And lichen from the wood he'll bring,
And mosses from the dell;
And from the sheltered stubble-field,
The scarlet pimpernell.

POOR ANDREW!

The loving poor!—So envy calls
The ever-toiling poor;
But, oh! I choke, my heart grows faint,
When I approach my door!

Behind it there are living things,
Whose silent frontlets say,
They'd rather see me out than in—
Feet-foremost borne away!
My heart grows sick, when home I come—
May God the thought forgive!
If 'twere not for my cat and dog,
I think I could not live.

My cat and dog, when I come home,
Run out to welcome me—
She, mewing, with her tail on end,
While wagging his comes he.
They listen for my homeward steps,
My smothered sob they hear,
When down my heart sinks, deathly down,
Because my home is near.
My heart grows faint when home I come,
May God the thought forgive!
If 'twere not for my dog and cat,
I think I could not live.

I'd rather be a happy bird
Than, scorn'd and loath'd, a king;
But man should live while for him lives
The meanest loving thing.
Thou busy bee! how canst thou choose
So far and wide to roam?
O blessed bee! thy glad wings say
Thou hast a happy home!
But I, when I come home—O God!
Wilt thou the thought forgive?
If 'twere not for my dog and cat,
I think I could not live.

Why come they not? They do not come
My breaking heart to meet!
A heavier darkness on me falls—
I cannot lift my feet.
O yes! they come—they never fail
To listen for my sighs;
My poor heart brightens when it meets
The sunshine of their eyes.
Again they come to meet me—God!
Wilt thou the thought forgive?
If 'twere not for my dog and cat,
I think I could not live.

This heart is like a churchyard stone;
My home is comfort's grave;
My playful cat and honest dog
Are all the friends I have;
And yet my house is filled with friends—
But foes they seem and are.
What makes them hostile? Ignorance;
Then let me not despair.
But O! I sigh when home I come—
May God the thought forgive!
If 'twere not for my dog and cat,
I think I could not live.

HOLIDAY.

O blessed! when some holiday
Brings townsmen to the moor,
And, in the sunbeams, brighten up
The sad looks of the poor.
The bee puts on his richest gold,
As if that worker knew—
How hardly (and for little) they
Their sunless task pursue.
But from their souls the sense of wrong
On dove-like pinion flies;
And, throned o'er all, forgiveness sees
His image in their eyes.
Soon tired, the street-born lad lies down
On marjoram and thyme,
And through his grated fingers sees
The falcon's flight sublime;
Then his pale eyes, so bluely dull,
Grow darkly blue with light,
And his lips redden like the bloom
O'er miles of mountains bright.
The little lovely maiden-hair
Turns up its happy face,
And saith unto the poor man's heart,
"Thou'rt welcome to this place."
The infant river leapeth free,
Amid the brachen tall,
And cries, "FOR EVER there is ONE
Who reigneth over all;
And unto Him, as unto me,
Thou'rt welcome to partake
His gift of light, His gift of air,
O'er mountain, glen, and lake.
Our father loves us, want-worn man!
And know thou this from me:
The pride that makes thy pain his couch,
May wake to envy thee.
Hard, hard to bear are want and toil,
As thy worn features tell;
But wealth is armed with fortitude,
And bears thy sufferings well."

SONG.

Nor alehouse scores, nor alehouse broils
Turn my good woman pale;
For in my pantry I've a keg
Of home-brewed ale.
The devil keeps a newspaper
Where tavern-wranglers rail,
Because it tempts his doomed and lost
To drink bad ale.
But I read news at second-hand,
Nor find it flat and stale;
While Hume's or Hindley's health I drink
In home-brewed ale.
My boys and girls delight to see
My friends and me regale,
While Nancy, curtsying, deigns to sip
Our home-brewed ale;
And when the widowed pauper comes,
To tell her monthly tale,
I sometimes cheer her with a drop
Of home-brewed ale;
It tells her heart of better days,
Ere she grew thin and pale,
When James, before the banker failed,
Drank home-brewed ale.
I'll melt no money in my drink,
Where ruffians fight and rail:
The gauger never dipped his stick
In my cheap ale.
But when we household suffrage get,
And honest men prevail;
Then, hey, mechanics, for free trade,
And cheaper ale!

LESS FOR MORE.

They mean their tax on bread to be
  Progressive with our numbers;
They bid us crowd around the gulf
  O'er which Destruction slumbers.
Food, health, and safety, they restrict,
  But cannot check our numbers;
So we increase and multiply,
  While drugg'd Convulsion slumbers.

But Parson Malthus says they can
  And do restrict our numbers,
In Ireland, where, with half-shut eyes,
  Convulsion snorts and slumbers.
Well, let their tax on safety be
  Progressive with our numbers;
We all can marry—can't we, Bess?—
  Tho' drugg'd Convulsion slumbers.

They hug their peril-premium close,
  And say, "Destruction slumbers!"
They see not that he only winks,
  While we fill up our numbers.
Convulsion's act of Parliament!
  Know'st thou why Ruin slumbers?
He slumbers not, but shuts his eyes,
  Till we've filled up our numbers.

RUB OR RUST.

Idler, why lie down to die?
  Better rub than rust.
Hark! the lark sings in the sky—
  "Die when die thou must!
Day is waking, leaves are shaking,
  Better rub than rust."

In the grave there 's sleep enough—
  "Better rub than rust:
Death, perhaps, is hunger-proof,
  Die when die thou must;
Men are mowing, breezes blowing,
  Better rub than rust."

He who will not work shall want;
  Nought for nought is just—
Won't do, *must* do, when he *can't;*
  "Better rub than rust.
Bees are flying, sloth is dying,
  Better rub than rust."

SONG.

Thick Dick can read, but signs his mark;
He likes a spree, when nights are dark;
  And sometimes drinks his wages.
Blue Jem can neither read nor write;
But starves his wife, and loves a fight:
  What beasts are bards and sages!

Dick poaches when his work is done;
Jem fuddles at the "Dog and Gun,"
  And laughs at bards and sages;
With stolen brass Dick's boy buys gin;
In lampless lanes, Jem's daughter thin
  Earn's prostitution's wages!

See how they reel from street to street,
Where ruffians bawl and strumpets meet
  To earn their dreadful wages!

"See!" cry the brutes who make them brutes,
"What humbugs are your institutes!
  How useless are your sages!

"Are these your Watts and Stevensons?
Your Chantreys and your Chattertons?
  Your poets, painters, sages?"
No; these are *things* that sell their votes,
And strain their loyal English throats,
  That lords may steal their wages!

To clothe the squire they waste their lives;
They rob their children, starve their wives,
  To pay his footmen's wages.
They cannot write, they will not think;
To feed their foes, they work and drink;
  What beasts are bards and sages!

See, palaced brutes that feed on brutes!
And curse mechanic's institutes,
  Because ye want their wages!
See how they reel from street to street,
Where brawls my lord, and ruffians meet!*
  You're safe, if these are rages!

THE HOME OF TASTE.

You seek the home of taste, and find
  The proud mechanic there,
Rich as a king, and less a slave,
  Thron'd in his elbow-chair!
Or on his sofa reading Locke,
  Beside his open door!†
Why start?—why envy worth like his
  The carpet on his floor?

You seek the home of sluttery—
  "Is John at home?" you say.
"No, sir; he's at the 'Sportman's Arms;'
  The dog-fight 's o'er the way."
O lift the workman's heart and mind
  Above low sensual sin!
Give him a home! the home of taste!
  Outbid the house of gin!‡

O give him taste! it is the link
  Which binds us to the skies—
A bridge of rainbows, thrown across
  The gulph of tears and sighs;
Or like a widower's little one—
  An angel in a child—
That leads him to her mother's chair,
  And shews him how she smil'd.

THE SUMMER-HOUSE.

Go, Mary, to the summer-house,
  And sweep the wooden floor,
And light the little fire, and wash
  The pretty varnished door;

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* How many of these victims of the aristocracy are members of Mechanics' Institutes? Not one.

† This is not an overcharged picture of the condition of some of the mechanics of Sheffield. But the home of taste is within the reach of thousands of them. Teach them, while yet there is time, to appreciate it, and they will unbreadtax themselves.

‡ O that I could express in rhyme this sentiment, as it came, clothed in beauty and holiness, from the lips of Dr Knight, at our last cutler's feast!

For there the London gentleman,
Who lately lectured here,
Will smoke a pipe with Jonathan,
And taste our home-brewed beer.

Go, bind the Dahlias, that our guest
May praise their fading dyes;
But strip of every withered bloom
The flower that won the prize!
And take thy father's knife, and prune
The roses that remain;
And let the fallen hollyhock
Peep through the broken pane.

And sponge his view of Blacklowscar,
Till bright, on moor and town,
The painted sun, and stormy crest,
O'er leagues of cloud look down.
He rose at three, to work till four—
The evenings still are long—
And still for every lingering flower
The redbreast hath a song.

I'll follow in an hour or two;
Be sure I will not fail
To bring his flute and spying-glass,
The pipes, and bottled ale;
And that grand music which he made
About the child in bliss,
Our guest shall hear it sung and played,
And feel how grand it is!

JEM AND NANCY.

Jem's Nancy is a preacher—
Inspir'd when he is vex'd!
She never lacks a sermon,
For he is still the text;
She preaches all his faults and flaws,
And pays them all in kind,
But most she hates, and more than all,
The faults she cannot find.

To shew she hates him dearly,
She bans his hated name;
Then curses, with his kindred,
The country whence he came;
And, cursing uncle, aunt, and niece,
And grandam in her shroud,
Thinks none but he so vile as they,
And meekly thinks aloud.

When Jem is sad and weary,
She cheers him with her growl,
And howls her all-night sermon,
To comfort his poor soul.
Th' awaken'd town mistakes her strains
For music of the spheres!
And he keeps watch and ward till morn,
With both thumbs in his ears.

Behold how woman teacheth,
When woman is untaught!
What is't that ails Jem's Nancy?
Her fury is not thought.
O light! that never shin'st so fair
As in a woman's mind!
Bring hues from heav'n, and, through her eyes,
Illumine all mankind!

SONG

Let idlers despair! there is hope for the wise,
Who rely on their own hearts and hands;
And we read in their souls, by the flash of their eyes,
That our land is the noblest of lands.
Let knaves fear for England, whose thoughts wear a mask,
While a war on our trenchers they wage;
Free trade and no favour is all that we ask!
Fair play, and the world for a stage!

Secure in their baseness, the lofty and bold
Look down on their victims beneath;
Like snow on a skylight, exalted and cold,
They shine o'er the shadow of death;
In the warm sun of knowledge, that kindles our blood,
And fills our cheer'd spirits with day,
Their splendour, contemn'd by the brave and the good,
Like a palace of ice melts away.

Our compass, which married the East to the West,
Our press, which makes many minds one,
Our steam-sinew'd giant that toils without rest,
Proclaim that our perils are gone.
We want but the right, which the god of the right
Denies not to birds and to bees;
The charter of Nature! that bids the wing'd light
Fly chainless as winds o'er the seas.

SONG.

With hair grown gray, we look behind
On passions whose wild reign is o'er—
Virtues, whose failure stings the mind,
And troubles that molest no more:

Slow pass'd the days of toil and care;
Yet, oh! how fast they seem to fly,
When we look back on our despair,
And call it hope, yet know not lie!

And still they pass, and shade on shade
Deepens, their wo-mark path along;
But thou, O God! art strong to aid;
Ay, and in thee the weak are strong.

SONG.

Free Trade, like religion, hath doctrines of love,
And the promise of plenty and health;
It proclaims, while the angels look down from above,
The marriage of Labour and Wealth.

Free Trade, like religion, hath doctrines of peace,
Universal as God's vital air;
And, thron'd o'er doom'd evil, he hails its increase,
While his enemies only despair.

By all who their blood on Truth's altars resign'd,
To enfranchise a sin-fetter'd race!
Our sons shall be freed from the curse of the blind,
And redeem'd from the bonds of the base.

The ark of our triumph, far, far as seas roll,
Shall ride o'er the wealth-freighted waves;
The chain'd of the drones be the chainless in soul,
And tyrants made men by their slaves.

The hall of our fathers, with heav'n for its dome,
And the steps of its portals the sea—
Of labour and comfort will then be the home,
And the temple where worship the Free.

SONG.

O'er Polonia's plains of glory,
Freedom tower'd—a stately tree;
From all storms, a sky of branches
Shelter'd mine and sheltered me.

Underneath the tree of ages,
Many a merry song sung we;
Carv'd his rind, and kiss'd his shadow;
Oh, we lov'd the glorious tree!

Now, alas! no sky of branches
Shelters mine and shelters me!
Now, alas! the tree of Poland
Low is fall'n, as low can be!

And, as on Euphrates' waters,
When the mournful moonbeam slept,
Israel's wanderers, sad for Zion,
With the weeping willows wept,

So we mourn, and, all unheeded,
Make our roof the unpillar'd sky;
So we roam, and friendless, hopeless,
Shed the tear of memory.

THE WINTER SPEEDWELL.

Ye wintry flowers, whose pensive dyes
Wake, where the summer's lily sleeps!
Ye are like orphans, in whose eyes
Their low-laid mother's beauty weeps.

Oh, not like stars that come at eve,
Through dim clouds glimmering one by one,
And teach the failing heart to grieve,
Because another day is gone!

But like the hopes that linger yet
Upon the grave of sorrow's love,
And dare Affection to forget
The form below, the soul above;

Or like the thoughts that bid Despair
Repose in faith on Mercy's breast;
Givers of wings—from toil and care—
To fly away and be at rest!

IMITATION.

Lo! where the fuddled artisan
Goes forth with dog and gun,
Determined, like a gentleman,
To kill and slay, for fun!
'Tis Christmas, trustful redbreast!
Bid thrush and wren beware!
Why may not he kill them or thee?
The Squire may kill his hare.

How like the squire yon tilter stalks,
With cock'd impatient gun!
Run daughter from the frozen walks!
Thou screaming mother, run!
Fly, fly, too lovely goldfinch,
And bid thy mate beware;
Why may not he shoot her or thee?
The parson shoots his hare.

Hark, squire! could'st thou the parson teach
What thou to learn art loath,
The saving word he yet might preach,
Ere Ruin teach ye both.
Who sitteth there in judgment?
The brutal and the blind;
While such as he teach bats to see,
Truth labours for the wind.

Embruted sloth makes toil a brute;
Unsoul'd alike are they;
The wood, the rill, to both are mute,
The heavens to both are clay:
But, God of snowy calmness,
Enthron'd o'er vale and hill!
Shall men, for fun, with dog and gun,
Thy sinless children kill?

When wilt thou, British Artisan,
Refuse to be an ape?
When wilt thou, British Gentleman,
From thy own bonds escape?
No eyes have they for beauty,
Who feed on hate and fear;
The silent field no joy can yield,
To hearts that will not hear.

A GHOST AT NOON.

The day was dark, save when the beam
Of noon through darkness broke;
In gloom I sate, as in a dream,
Beneath my orchard oak;
Lo! splendour, like a spirit, came,
A shadow like a tree!
While there I sat, and nam'd her name,
Who once sat there with me.

I started from the seat in fear;
I look'd around in awe;
But saw no beauteous spirit near,
Though all that was I saw;
The seat, the tree, where oft, in tears,
She mourn'd her hopes o'erthrown,
Her joys cut off in early years,
Like gather'd flowers half-blown.

Again the bud and breeze were met,
But Mary did not come;
And e'en the rose, which she had set,
Was fated ne'er to bloom!
The thrush proclaimed, in accents sweet,
That winter's rain was o'er;
The bluebells throng'd around my feet,
But Mary came no more.

I think, I feel—but when will she
Awake to thought again?
A voice of comfort answers me,
That God does nought in vain:
He wastes nor flower, nor bud, nor leaf,
Nor wind, nor cloud, nor wave;
And will he waste the hope which grief
Hath planted in the grave?

SONG.

Like a rootless rose or lily;
  Like a sad and life-long sigh;
Like a bird pursued and weary,
  Doom'd to flutter till it die;
Landless, restless, joyless, hopeless,
  Gasping still for bread and breath,
To their graves by trouble hunted,
  Albion's helots toil for death.

Tardy day of hoarded ruin,
  Wild Niagara of blood!
Coming sea of headlong millions,
  Vainly seeking work and food!
Why is famine reaped for harvest?
  Planted curses always grow;
Where the plough makes want its symbol,
  Fools will gather as they sow.

SONG.

Sleep, sleep my love! thy gentle bard
Shall wake, his fevered maid to guard:
  The moon in heaven rides high;
The dim stars through thy curtains peep;
Whilst thou, poor sufferer, triest to sleep,
  They hear thy feeble cry.

She sleeps! but pain, though baffl'd, streaks,
With intermitting blush, her cheeks,
  And haunts her troubled dream:
Yet shalt thou wake to health, my love,
And seek again the bluebell'd grove,
  And music-haunted stream.

HE WENT.

He left me sad, and crossed the deep,
  A home for me to seek;
He never will come back again;
  My heart, my heart, will break!
To see me toil for scanty food,
  He could not bear, he said,
But promised to come back again,
  His faithful Ann to wed.

Bad men had turned into a hell
  The country of his birth;
And he is gone who should have stayed
  To make it heaven on earth:
A heaven to me it would have been
  Had he remained with me;
O bring my William back again,
  Thou wild heart-breaking sea!

He should have stayed to overthrow
  The men who do us wrong;
When such as he fly far away,
  They make oppressors strong:
But, oh, though worlds of cruel waves
  Between our torn hearts rise,
My William, thou art present still
  Before my weeping eyes.

Why hast thou sought a foreign land,
  And left me here to weep?
Man! man! thou should'st have sent our foes
  Beyond that dismal deep!
For when I die, who then will toil,
  My mother's life to save?
What hope will then remain for her?
  A trampled workhouse grave!

HE WROTE.

He did not come, but letters came,
  And money came in one;
But he would quickly come, they said—
  "When I," she sighed, "am gone!"
Thenceforth she almost welcom'd death,
  With feelings high and brave;
Because she knew that her true love
  Would weep upon her grave.

"No parish hirelings," oft she said,
  "My wasted corpse shall bear;
The honest labour of my hands
  Hath purchas'd earth and prayer:
Nor childless will my mother be;"
  The dying sufferer smiled;
"Thou wilt not want, for William's heart
  Is wedded to thy child!"

But Death seemed loath to strike a form
  So beautiful and young;
And o'er her long, with lifted dart,
  The pensive tyrant hung;
And life in her seem'd like a sleep,
  As she drew nearer home;
But when she wak'd, more eagerly
  She ask'd, "Is William come?"

"Is William come?" she wildly asked;
  The answer still was, "No!"—
She's dead!—but through her closing lids,
  The tears were trickling slow;
And like the fragrance of a rose,
  Whose snowy life is o'er,
Pale beauty lingered on the lips
  Which he will kiss no more.

HE CAME.

At length he came. None welcom'd him;
  The decent door was clos'd;
But near it stood a matron meek,
  With pensive looks, compos'd:
She knew his face, though it was chang'd,
  And gloom came o'er her brow;
"They're gone," she said, "but you're in time;
  They're in the churchyard now."

He reach'd the grave, and sternly bade
  The impatient shovel wait:
"Ann Spencer, aged twenty-five,"
  He read upon the plate.
"Why did'st thou seek a foreign land,
  And leave me here to die?"
The sad inscription seem'd to say—
  But he made no reply.

Her mother saw him through her tears,
But not a word she said—
Nor could he know that days had pass'd
Since last she tasted bread.
She stood in comely mourning there,
Self-stayed in her distress;
The dead maid's toil bought earth and prayer;
Sleep on, proud Britoness!"

But thou, meek parent of the dead!
Where now wilt thou abide?
With William in a foreign land;
Or by thy daughter's side?
Oh! William's broken heart is sworn,
To cross no more the foam!
Full soon will men cry—"Hark! again!
Three now! they're *all* at home!"

ON THE DEATH OF EARL FITZWILLIAM.

O ye, who died, trampled, at Peterloo,
By England's Juggernaut! Ye too who drank
Slowly life's bitterest cup, not drugged with rue,
But brimm'd with hopeless pain; and ye who sank
In blood at Wexford, rolling rank o'er rank,
Like storm-swept waves! the golden door throw wide,
(It needs no golden key,) and hail and thank
The meek, the merciful, who ne'er denied
His aid to want and grief, when they for succour cried.

But ye who plough the flint with curses! ye,
Who scalding tears o'er wrongs inflicted weep,
And drink them from your eyes of misery,
To quench with fire the burning soul, or creep
To cold discomfort's bed, and, dreaming, steep
Your straw in agonies! keep, pallid slaves,
Who still wear chains! your worm that dies not keep!
And kneeling, in your hearts, on tyrant's graves,
Swear deathless hate to them, their gods, their fools, and knaves.

SABBATH MORNING.

Rise, young Mechanic! Idle darkness leaves
The dingy town, and cloudless morning glows:
O rise and worship him who spins and weaves
Into the petals of the hedge-side rose
Day's golden beams and all-embracing air!
Rise! for the morn of Sabbath riseth fair!
The clouds expect thee—Rise! the stonechat hops
Among the mosses of thy granite chair:
Go tell the plover, on the mountain tops,
That *we* have cherished nests and hidden wings.
Wings? Ay, like those on which the seraph flings
His sun-bright speed from star to star abroad;
And we have Music, like the whisperings
Of streams in heav'n—our *labour* is an ode
Of sweet sad praise to him who loves the right.
And cannot he, who spins the beauteous light,
And weaves the air into the wild flowers hues,
Give to thy soul the mountain torrent's might,
Or fill thy veins with sunbeams, and diffuse
Over thy thoughts the greenwood's melody?
Yea, this and more he can and will for thee,
If thou wilt read, engraven on the skies
And restless waves, that "sloth is misery;
And that our worth from our necessities
Flows, as the rivers from his clouds descend!"

TASTE.

When, o'er her dying child, we hear
The hopeless mother sigh;
"There is a better world," we sob;
"Can such affection die?"
Perhaps it can—for wolves and worms
Have their affections too;
And passion sometimes loves the false
Even better than the true.

But Taste, in its infinity,
Its beauty, and its might,
Walks thro' the beams of common day,
In robes of heavenly light:
A spirit—ay, a deathless Eve,
To man's pure bosom given:
They meet—earth's Eden is not lost!
They part—to meet in Heaven!

What power like that which turns to bliss
The mournful and the dull,
And from the dust beneath our feet
Calls up the beautiful,
Can bid the hopes of frailty soar,
Undying life, to thee?
Pride dies with man; but Taste predicts
His immortality.

THE WOODBINES OF JUNE.

Broom glow'd in the valley,
For William and Sally,
The rose with the rill was in tune;
Love fluttering their bosoms
As breezes the blossoms,
They stray'd thro' the woodbines of June.

Oft, oft he caress'd her,
And to his heart press'd her,
The rose with the woodbine was twin'd;
Her cheek on his bosom,
Like dew on the blossom,
Enchanted the tale-telling wind.

Poor Sally was bonny,
But Mary had money,
Ay, money, and beauty beside;
And wilt thou, sweet Mary,
Thou fond and unwary,
Deprive the wise fool of his bride?

Yes, bee-haunted valley!
Poor heart-broken Sally
No more, with her William, will stray—
"He marries another!
I'm dying!—O mother!
Take, take that sweet woodbine away!"

THE REJECTED.

His hand clasp'd in her's, she look'd up in the face
That once gaz'd as fondly on me;
Two boys and a girl, in their butterfly chase,
Ran before them with laughter and glee.

He saw me—he knew me—his brown cheek turn'd pale,
"Oh, still doth he love me?" I sigh'd;
But my heart how it sank! and I felt my knees fail,
As I look'd on his beautiful bride.

In their comely attire, and their calm thankful air,
The tale of their virtues was told;
While, childless and mateless, in want and despair,
Was the woman who spurn'd him for gold.

Oh, even at the altar, when coldly I gave
My hand to the thing I had bought,
Remorse told my heart, in a voice from my grave,
That I barter'd a shadow for nought!

Nought! call ye it nought to applaud what ye hate?
To honour, yet feign to contemn?
To borrow of servants? and, apeing the great,
Envy all that 's look'd down on by them?

'Till at last; but, O Henry! my doom I could bear,
Might I know that thou weepest for me;
And feel, while the robe of my weaving I wear,
That I still am remember'd by thee?

That while thou tread'st humbly, with truth for thy stay,
The path that to competence led,
Thou pitiest the proud one who threw thee away,
And think'st of her desolate bed.

RAINBOWED MAY.

Now, over violets the chaffinch hops,
And bursts of sunshine startle wood and copse,
With bluebells gay;
For heav'n is dim with showers, and mountain-tops
Look down on rainbow'd May:
Haste then, mechanic, take thy spade and hoes;
Haste to thy garden, while thy soul o'erflows
With hope and joy;
And with thee take, rejoicing as he goes,
Thy heart-awaken'd boy.

Lo! his cheek reddens as he lifts his eyes!
He grasps his rusted rake with joyful cries
And sinews stark;
And to his shout his smoke-dried dog replies,
With dusty frisk and bark;
For to the garden, where the red-breast hops,
Through gleams of light that startle wood and copse
They take their way;
While, bath'd in dewy air, the mountain tops
Look down on rain-bow'd May.

THE SPIRIT OF THE FIRST EMIGRANT.

Upon the dreadful battle-field, methought,
High on Breed's Hill, after the fight was done,
Amid the dead, yet fearing not the dead,
I stood before a form, that sadden'd might.
"Featureless presence! Are thy tresses mist?
Or hast thou lineaments? The blast unveils thee,
Visage of mystery! and swirls the cloud
That seems thy carpet." From the earth it rose
Slow, from a nameless tomb, with human gore
Polluted in the fight of yesterday,
Nor scattered the red death-dews from a flower;
A dim form, mingling with the tempest's light,
All indistinct, as the moon's shrouded beams,
Seen thro' the snow-flakes, when they fluttering fall,
Muffling the mountain echoes silently.
The seeming brow was turn'd to heav'n, the hands
In deprecation wav'd. "Cloud-involved moon!
Stars, that from earth's blood-bolter'd face withdraw
Your blasted beams," exclaim'd a hollow voice;
"For peace I cross'd the sable rolling seas,
Left country, friends, all, but my God, for peace
To worship him in truth and purity.
I first, from persecution flying, rear'd
The white man's home amid Columbian woods,
God's altar, in the unhewn temple wild
Of Nature. There, where bright Connecticut
Waters a sin-found Eden, with my sons
I kneel'd, and gave the god of deserts praise.
I kiss'd their hands; I bade them live in love,
And sometimes think of me; and then I slept.
They wept; they dug, near ocean's echoing shore,
My narrow bed of rest; and unknown flowers
Bloom'd o'er it, drooping lonely. But the blood
Of murder hath profan'd the shuddering tomb,
And call'd the slumberer from his bed of worms.
In vain for peace, for peace I cross'd the seas,
And vainly left, far east, my mother's grave;
Nor may my children's children dwell in peace,
Nor worship God in truth and purity."

SONG.

Land of the men who brought before
All nations, in all times,
A king, soul-gorg'd with crime and gore,
And slew him for his crimes!

Shall we not name thy name with pride,
Fam'd mother of the brave?
Who would not die as Hampden died,
That looks on Sidney's grave?

O'er it thy mountain summits rise,
Thy dewy roses bloom;
We stand upon it—here he lies!
Thou, Britain, art his tomb!

Yet scorners say, thy hills and vales
Are curs'd from sea to sea;
The land of palaces and jails,
Derision nameth thee.

Where demons tax the air and light,
And taint with plague the air,
For shameful stripes thy children fight,
Or labour in despair.

Land of the great, the wise, the good!
When wilt thou break thy chains?
And startle into honest blood
The filth in tyrants' veins?

When wilt thou, with the voice of God,
Alarm thy damn'd of old?

Call Hampden's spirit from the sod?
And wake the dead and cold?

All power, but our's, as dust is weak,
When million minds are one:
Great voice, of outraged millions, speak!
Great will of God be done!

SONG.

Squire Merchant lauds the kinglings
Who tax our beef and bread,
And prove, by act of Parliament,
That idlers shall be fed;

But when conspiring filesmiths
For doubled wages rave,
Squire Merchant damns the filesmith,
And calls him fool and knave.

When wilt thou, stupid filesmith!
When wilt thou, stupid squire!
Shew pauper lords and gentlemen
The bread-tax price of mire?

Three days of tradeless England
Would dig and fill her grave!
God! haste not so to rid us
Of palac'd fool and knave!

AIR.

Old men, bow'd with care and crime,
Bow'd like oaks, all white with snow;
Young men gray before their time,
Harder work for deeper wo.

Still we toil, by want unnerv'd,
Toil and pine, and pining die;
Fix'd in sorrow undeserv'd,
Constant as eternity.

Food and rest for toil and care!
Leave to toil for early graves!
This we ask in our despair,
"Die," they answer. "Perish, slaves!"

HANNAH RATCLIFFE.

If e'er she knew an evil thought,
She spoke no evil word.
Peace to the gentle! she hath sought
The bosom of her Lord.

She lived to love, and loved to bless
Whatever he hath made;
But early on her gentleness
His chastening hand he laid.

Like a maim'd linnet, nurs'd with care,
She graced a home of bliss;
And dwelt in thankful quiet there,
To shew what goodness is.

Her presence was a noiseless power,
That sooth'd us day by day—
A modest, meek, secluded flower,
That smiled, and pass'd away.

So meek she was, that, when she died,
We miss'd the lonely one,
As when we feel, on Loxley's side,
The silent sunshine gone.

But memory brings to sunless bowers
The light they knew before;
And Hannah's quiet smile is our's,
Though Hannah is no more.

Her pale face visits yet my heart,
And oft my guest will be;
O White Rose! thou shalt not depart,
But wither here with me.

CIVILIZED WAR.

Death looks on us now with a laugh of delight,
For a hearty good fellow is he:
Hot, hot, as a furnace of fire grows the fight:
O Glory and Horror! do ye
Calcine in the heat of the battle our blood,
Of his horrible vintage the wine!
So let our red sacrament hallow the flood
Now gushing red hot from the vine!

For proud beggar'd England's sage kinglings and squires
Play at war, that their sons may want bread!
They have staked their proud portals, their temples, and spires,
That her millions shall labour half-fed!
Why? A dunghill-bred cock, with a spur in his brain,
Hath won the best perch from them all;
And rather than let him his conquest retain,
The nation of workers shall fall!

THE MAY BROAD-LEAF.

When Winter howls along the hill,
We find the broad-leaf'd plantain still;
The May broad-leaf, of herbs the chief,
We never miss the May broad-leaf;
'Tis common as the poor.

To soothe the cruel scorner's woes,
Beneath the scorner's feet it grows;
Neglected, trampled, still it thrives,
A creature of unnumber'd lives;
How like the trampled poor!

When roses die, it still remains;
Hoof-crush'd, beneath unpitying rains,
Rolled o'er by ringing carts and wains,
It suffers still, but ne'er complains;
Just like the helpless poor!

Scorn'd by the bluebells—or bent o'er
Their graves, beneath the sycamore—
Meek, modest, silent, useful still,
It loves to do the gentle will
Of Him who loves the poor!

PROLOGUE TO WATT TYLER.

A PLAY, BY JOHN WATKINS.

While they whose sordid lusts oppress a state,
Forestall, because they dread, the public hate,
Slow to resent are nations; man endures
The cures of bondage, better than he cures.
We tremble when the ocean, white with foam,
Hails the deep voice of rivers roaring home,
And the black sky, which fire's wild instinct rends,
Like a Niagara of clouds descends;
But calm succeeds, the mountain'd plain subsides,
In music soon the meeken'd river glides,
And when the wholesome hurricane is o'er,
Earth wears a look more lovely than before.
Not always thus, when nations, stung to rage,
On kings and priests a war of vengeance wage;
E'en though triumphant, oft with ruin fraught,
The human tempest strengthens what it smote;
O'er rout or victory, derision names
A Louis Phillip or a second James;
A Cromwell or Napoleon, curs'd with might,
Turns hope to darkness, with portentous light,
Plague from the enthusiast's sinless Eden brings,
And plum'd by Freedom, tramples on her wings.
Too seldom, if the righteous fight is won,
Rebellion boasts a Tell or Washington;
But if the champion of the People fail,
Foes only live to tell Misfortune's tale,
And meanness blots, while none to praise is nigh,
The herd's best virtues, with a coward's lie.
To-night we bring, from his insulted grave,
A man too honest to become a slave:
How few admire him! few, perhaps, bewail'd!
He was a vulgar hero—for he failed:
Such glorious honours soothe the patriot's shade!
Of such materials History is made!
But had his followers triumph'd where he fell,
Fame would have hymn'd her village Hampden well,
And Watt the Tyler been a William Tell.

SONG.

Bright Word of God! that shinest on high,
Beneath his footstool of the sky!
Thou say'st he made thee bright for all,
For rich and poor, for great and small;
And canst thou lie?

Lo! on the prisoner's dungeon'd eye,
Cut off from heaven's warm blasonry,
Thy beams of glory cannot fall!
Yet say'st thou, light was made for all;
And dost thou lie?

The sons of Want and Labour sigh
For air, for light, and, poison'd, die!
Life is to them a funeral pall!
Yet say'st thou, light is bright for all;
O do not lie!

To thee the lark, the eagle cry,
The tiny wren, the little fly;
On thee the seas, the mountains call:
Thou say'st, God made thee bright for all,
And dost not lie.

CORONATION ODE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SHEFFIELD WORKING MEN'S ASSOCIATION.

Victoria, cypress-crown'd! thou good in vain!
How the red wreath, with which thy name is bound—
The page which tells the first deeds of thy reign,
Black, and blood-blotted—cheer the Calmuck hound,
Whose growl o'er Brunswick hails thee, cypress-crown'd!

Canada weeps—and yet her *dead* are free!
Throned o'er their blood! who would not be a Queen?
The Queen *of new-made graves*, who would not be?
Of glory's royal flowers the loveliest seen!
So young! yet all that the deplored have been!

Here too, O Queen, thy wo-worn people feel
The load they bear is *more* than they can bear!
Beneath it twenty-million workers reel!
While fifty thousand idlers rob and glare,
And mock the sufferings which they yet may share!*

The drama soon will end. Four acts are past:
The curtain rises o'er embracing foes!
But each dark smiler hugs his dagger fast!
While Doom prepares his match, and waits the close!
Queen of the Earthquake! would'st thou win or lose?†

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* Palaced-pauper, Sir John Owen, on Tuesday last, in the Lower House of breadtax-eaters, called the plundered Sheffielders "miserable artisans." Because they don't use their property as highwaymen use their pistols! Is this thy meaning, Sir John?

† The first act was the war with our American colonies, *arising out of Tory restrictions on their trade!* The second act was *the coalition of Whigs and Tories in* 1793, to prevent that Reform which would have prevented a war, that cost, perhaps, two thousand millions, and ended in a tax on food—which tax threatens to destroy our trade, and, of course, to anarchise the nation. The third act was the perpetration of that tax on food in 1815, by which (and by a law called Peel's Bill) its authors secured their war-prices in peace, and their paper-prices in gold; villanous advantages, which they have followed up by depriving the poor of their privilege of out-door pay—in the face of their own declaration, placed on eternal record, that they are themselves the most destructive horde of beggars and thieves that ever infested any community! "For they cannot live without protection," they declare; and their declaration must be either false or true: if it is true, why do they not go to the workhouse? if it is false, why are they not sent to the tread-mill? This ominous fourth act is now closing, with *another coalition of Whigs and Tories to prevent all Reform!* Even so was the French Revolution produced by the obstinate refusal of the Aristocracy to bear any share of the taxes, they having untaxed themselves; and they ended, as our's will, by fighting with the executive for the remains of the public spoil. "*Horribly like*," as said Fum the Fourth of his father's portrait. Shade of Fowlon! is it not?

Still shall the Car of Juggernaut roll on,
O'er broken hearts and children born in vain,
Banner'd with fire! while "thousand men as one"*
Sink down beneath its coward wheels of pain,
That crush out souls, through crunshing blood and brain!

Stop!—for to ruin Antoinette was led,
By men, who only when they died awoke!
Base nobles who, o'er France vain darkness spread,
And, goading her faint steeds with stroke on stroke,
Loaded the wain—until the axles broke!

Stop!—"*for the blasting engine's iron Laws*,"†
Then saved not thrones from outraged Heav'n's control,
When hunger urg'd up to the cannon's jaws
A sea of men, with only one wild soul!‡
Hark!—still I hear the echo of its roll!§

VERSES

ON THE OPENING OF THE SHEFFIELD AND ROTHERHAM RAILWAY.

Forests!—thou river'd landscape wide!—
Beneath storm-threatening skies.‖
I stand on war-mark'd Winco's side,
And see, with gladdened eyes,
Another triumph for mankind—
Another victory of mind
O'er man's worst enemies.

They come! the shrieking steam ascends,
Slow moves the banner'd train;
They rush! the towering vapour bends—
The kindled wave again
Screams over thousands, thronging all
To witness now the funeral
Of law-created pain.

Behold it—Osgathorpe, behold!*
Look down, and cry "All hail!"
Skies! brighten into blue and gold,
O'er all the living vale!
Wan, lingering fox-glove! you, ye trees!
Thou, wood of Tinsley! tell the breeze
That hell's dark cheek turns pale;

For Mind shall conquer time and space;
Bid East and West shake hands!
Bring, over Ocean, face to face,
Earth's ocean-sever'd strands;
And, on his path of iron, bear
Words that shall wither, in despair,
The tyrants of all lands.

Eternal River!—roaring still,
As roar'd thy foamy wave
When first each wild-rose skirted rill
Heard moorland echoes rave;—
Thou seest, amid thy meadows green,
The goodliest sight that earth hath seen
Since man made fire his slave.

Fire-kindling Man! how weak wast thou
Ere thou hadst conquer'd fire!
How like a worm, on Canklow's brow,
Thou shrank'st from winter's ire!
Or heard'st the torrent-gathering night
Awake the wolf, with thee to fight,
Where these broad shades aspire!

How dismal was thy airy hall,
Thy throne for hearthless kings!
But glorious was thy funeral pall;
And there are direr things
Than thy red-rule of forest law,
Thy last home in the raven's maw,
Thy hearse of living wings.

Yes, he whom scorn and hunger ban,
Whom ease and law belie,
Who vainly asks his fellow man
For "leave to toil" and die,
Is sadder, weaker, than wast thou,
When naked here, on Winco's brow,
Thou didst the wolf defy.

In vain thou mak'st the air a slave
That works and will not tire;
And burn'st the flame-destroying wave,
And rid'st on harness'd fire;
In vain—if millions toil half-fed,
And Crompton's children, begging bread,
Wealth-hated, curse their sire.

Fire-kindling man! thy life-stream runs,
Even yet, through sighs and groans:
Too long thy Watts and Stephensons,
With brains have fatten'd drones;
O Genius! all too long, too oft,
At thee the souls of clay have scoff'd,
And sold thy litttle ones!

Sold them to Misery's dungeon gloom;
To Rapine's menial blow;
To beggary's brawl-filled lodging-room,
Where Famine curses wo;
Then to the death-den's workhouse floor,
To which good Christians bring the poor,
By stages sure and slow.

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* Bamford's "Pass of Time."

† Thomas Carlyle's "History of the Revolution."—Read it, Squire.

‡ Yet Chandos—magnificent beggar—equally modest, honest, and wise—"expects to hear no more about Corn-Laws."

§ Still there is hope that revolution may be avoided, if the workers will demand the franchise; and they need only ask to have. Pitt perpetrated his crimes, by discovering that a new power had arisen in England—that of the middlec lasses. If the workers obtain political power, *they* will not, like their betters, sell themselves for their own sixpence—or rather, for a bad one, instead of it; but they may rest assured, that they will soon find A MINISTER to represent them in the counsels of the Crown; and that—though he and they may err—the majority can have no interest in doing wrong. "Wilt thou govern better than I?" *said a dethroned Emperor* of Constantinople to his successor. "Could I govern worse?" was the reply. Say, Marquis! could the workers govern worse than thou? The French Aristocracy misgoverned France till they stopped the spade and the hammer. Here, you Marquises seem likely to stop the steam-engine itself. The French, after a time, fell back on a sufficient agriculture; but here, an excessive agricultural population, and a still larger manufacturing one, will have to fall back on an agriculture insufficient to maintain either of them. Never mind. Drive on, Marquis. We may want a hackney coachman after all.

‖ The morning was clouded, but burst into sudden splendour over the rushing trains.

* A beautiful eminence between Sheffield and Winco-bank, and, like the latter, overlooking a landscape of equal beauty.

But, lo! the train!—On! onward!—still
Loud shrieks the kindled wave;
And back fly hamlet, tree, and hill,
White steam, and banners brave;
And thoughts on vapoury wings are hurl'd,
To shake old thrones and change a world,
And dig Abaddon's grave.

Mountains, that were when graves were not!
Time-humbled Templestowe,*
Thou tell'st of eagled Rome and Scott,
What dateless years shall know!
Lo! Mind prepares the final fall;
The many-nation'd funeral
Of law-created wo!

Eternal River!—roaring now,
As erst, in earlier years,
Ere grief began, with youthful brow,
To live an age of tears;
Thou hear'st, beneath this brightening sky,
A voice of Power that will not die
While man hath hopes and fears.

He, (conquering fire, and time, and space,)
Bids East and West shake hands;
Brings, over ocean, face to face,
Earth's ocean-sever'd strands;
And, on his iron road, will bear
Words that shall wither, in despair,
The tyrants of all lands.

HYMN.

Another wave is swallow'd by the sea
Of sunless waves!
Another year, thou past Eternity,
Hath roll'd o'er new-made graves!"
They open yet—to bid the living weep,
Where tears are vain;
While I, unswept into the ruthless deep,
Storm-tried and sad, remain.
Why am *I* spared? Surely to wear away,
By useful deeds,
Vile traces, left beneath th' upbraiding spray,
Of empty shells and weeds.
If there are deeds, which no repentance need,
And all can do,
Why should one heart with vain contrition bleed,
Self-tried, and found untrue?
But there are things which time devoureth not;
Thoughts, whose green youth
Flowers o'er the ashes of the unforgot,
And words, whose fruit is truth.
Are ye not imaged in the eternal sea,
Things of to-day?
Deeds which are harvest for Eternity!
Ye cannot pass away.

TRAFALGAR.

Above the howl of ocean
And frowning Trafalgar,
From bursting clouds, went forth the voice
Of elemental war;

And, louder than the tempest,
From man, the insect, came,
Beneath the frown of Trafalgar,
His deadly voice of flame.

But, ere it rent the blackness
Which God's stern brow cast wide,
"Now, Victory or Westminster!"
Said Nelson, in his pride.

"My comrades do your duty!
Or what will England say?"*
"They shall!" cried accents from the deep,
Where dead men weltering lay.

Red Horror tore the tempest;
Down stoop'd both sea and sky;
And, like a flood on Collingwood,
The clouds rush'd from on high.

Life pledged for life, arm'd thousands
Join'd then in horrid strife.
O Life, thou art an awful thing!—
For what is God but Life?

Shouts, groans, and man's dread thunder,
Made up one dismal cry:
The affrighted storm ask'd what it meant,
And Death made no reply.

But, on the grave of thousands,
A silent spirit trod;
He clasp'd them in th' *embrace* of Death—
And what is Death but God?

He car'd not for their glory,
He ask'd not of their cause;
While, right or wrong, the weak and strong
Obeyed alike his laws.

One tyrant lost his war-ships;
Worse tyrants summ'd their gains;
And toil-worn nations sang and danced,
(As maniacs dance,) in chains!

How like an empty bubble
The turmoil pass'd away!
"Where are the weak?" said sun and cloud—
"The mighty!—where are they?"

And birds of light and calmness—
Where dolphins gamboll'd free,
And heroes in their glory lay—
Flew over the smooth sea.

And, from his throne of silence,
The God of Peace look'd down,
Though sternly, on their bed of death,
With pity in his frown.

For Spaniard, Frank, and Briton,
All peaceful in one grave,
Like babies in their nurses' arms,
Slept under the green wave.

Image of God! through horrors
"That make the angels weep,"
Why seek the gift that comes unsought—
His boon of dreadful sleep?

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* The remains of a fortification at the Ickles, near Rotherham. See Scott's novel of "Ivanhoe."

* "Eng'and expects every man to do his duty."

THE STORMING OF BADAJOZ.*

A BALLAD.

"Take a single captive."—STERNE.

No star!—all was dark!—not a cloud could be seen!
Naught was heard, but the whisper'd command,
And the beating of hearts, where the bravest, I ween,
Held weapons that shook in the hand;
For strong was the fortress, and well knew the foe
Of our noiseless advancing array;
And night, in a moment, like lightning on snow,
Shone horribly brighter than day.

Ay—stars not her own, sent on missions of bale,
With arrow-like speed, climb'd the sky,
And, startling the bold, turn'd the umber'd cheeks pale
Of men sworn to conquer or die.
Then fire, like a river of thunder, rush'd o'er
The warrior-watch'd line in our van;
And he who, untroubled, could hear its waves roar,
Wore never the features of man.

One dropp'd out of six, at each rattle of balls;
We blacken'd, we rush'd—and were down:
"On, on, to th' assault! we must walk o'er the walls
To their daughters and wives in the town."
And who that knows aught of our lords and their lives,
And the paupers of state we maintain,
Would not kill our allies, and then ravish their wives,
For the Protestant cause in old Spain?

Still o'er us the glare of their fireballs they cast,
Their shot on our masses to throw:
"Up! up! scale the wall, boys!" We scaled it—and fast
Fell, spiked on our bayonets below.
But who that knows aught of our lords, and their laws,
And the Protestant cause they sustain,
Would not combat and die for the Protestant cause,
And its old Popish priesthood in Spain?

My God! how we're riddled! They flap us like flies!
Climb, devils! and fight hand to hand!
They burn up the gloom o'er our groans and our cries—
Damnation! what ladder can stand?
Our dead fill the ditch—but we tread where they stood:
Christ's death! will they flap us again?
Now! now!—or our gentry, who hate to shed blood,
Will despair of their church in old Spain.

"Don't falter! we've lives"—bought in Britain with gold;
And what will the gentlemen say,
And what their sweet ladies and parsons, if told
That the Hir'd-of-the-Spoil ran away?

"Hurrah! we are victors!"—on waves of red foam
We ride over Frenchmen again,
That our lords may still feed on the People at home,
And the old Popish priesthood in Spain.

Hey, Spaniards! thank England for friendship and war—
Take care, if you can, of your lives;
And we'll make a hymn to the pale morning star
Of the shrieks of your daughters and wives.
"In Freedom's wrong'd name, her worst foes we sustain,
And sheath in her bosom our swords:
Sink, Papist of Erin! swim, Papist of Spain!—
So order our squires and our lords."

Now, starv'd be the useful!—the honest bound down
In the doorless and windowless jail!
Ring out through all England—thorpe, city, and town!—
That the *arms* of the pious avail!
Let anthems to Moloch be heard on the breeze,
Wherever his name hath a fane!
And kneel, pious ladies, give thanks on your knees,
For the triumphs of hell in old Spain!

"Still, Thanes of the Isles! bet against my right-hand,
'Nor be warn'd,' saith the Lord, 'till ye've lost!'
When my fire-worm in France crept by night o'er the land,
Did her nobles take note of the cost?
No! nor then, when her peasantry rose like the sea,
And her palaces sank in their ire;
Nor then, when arm'd Paris found vengeance in me,
And the heart of a people took fire."

But, gamblers of nations! there cometh a day
When the debt of the doom'd must be paid:
Even now, while ye boast, saith the god of dismay,
"'Twas with me that your wager ye laid:
What stak'd ye? The future against my right-hand!
The fortunes of all ye love most!
The hopes of your children! your houses, your land!
And how stands the game? Ye have lost!"

---

* From the mouth of one of the heroes who, on that occasion, bartered a limb for glory and the breadtax. Are we on the eve of another crusade for chains?

HYMN.

Nurse of the Pilgrim Sires, who sought,
Beyond the Atlantic foam,
For fearless truth and honest thought,
A refuge and a home!
Who would not be of them or thee
A not unworthy son,
That hears, amid the chain'd or free,
The name of Washington?

Cradle of Shakspeare, Milton, Knox!
King-shaming Cromwell's throne!
Home of the Russells, Watts, and Lockes!
Earth's greatest are thine own:
And shall thy children forge base chains
For men that would be free?
No! by thy Elliots, Hampdens, Vanes,
Pyms, Sydneys, yet to be!

No!—for the blood which kings have gorged
Hath made their victims wise,
While every lie that Fraud hath forged
Veils wisdom from his eyes:
But time shall change the despot's mood:
And Mind is mightiest then,
When turning evil into good,
And monsters into men.

If round the *soul* the chains are bound
That hold the world in thrall—
If tyrants laugh when men are found
In brutal fray to fall—
Lord! let not Britain arm her hands,
Her sister states to ban;
But bless through her all other lands,
Thy family of Man.

For freedom if thy Hampden fought;
For peace if Falkland fell;
For peace and love if Bentham wrote,
And Burns sang wildly well—
Let Knowledge, strongest of the strong,
Bid hate and discord cease;
Be this the burden of her song:
"Love, Liberty, and Peace!"

Then, Father, will the nations all,
As with the sound of seas,
In universal festival,
Sing words of joy, like these:—
Let each love all, and all be free,
Receiving as they give;
Lord!—Jesus died for Love and Thee!
So let thy children live!

LINES

WRITTEN FOR THE SHEFFIELD MECHANIC'S FIRST EXHIBITION.

Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter,
Come duly, as of old;
Winds blow, suns set, and morning saith,
"Ye hills, put on your gold!"
Gray Stanage and his mountain'd sea
Roll, granite-billow'd, ever;
And Loxley, Sheaf, and Ewden, leave
Their dewy valleys never.

The song of Homer liveth;
Dead Solon is not dead;
Thy splendid name Pythagoras,
O'er realms of suns is spread!
If Milton's lay could pass from earth,
Heaven's bards that lay might cherish;
And Watt's great deed hath changed a world,
And will not, cannot perish.

But Babylon and Memphis
Are letters traced in dust:—
Read them, earth's tyrants!—ponder well
The might in which ye trust!

They rose, while all the depths of guilt
Their vain creators sounded;
They fell, because on fraud and force
Their corner stones were founded.

Truth, Mercy, Knowledge, Justice,
Are powers that ever stand;
They build their temples in the soul,
They work with God's right hand;
Their sword is thought! the minds they teach
Grow daily, hourly, wiser;
But Memphian Kings found ignorance
Their true and *last* adviser!

Then, Trader, Lord, or Yeoman,
If thou a patriot art—
If thou would'st weep to see the light
Of England's name depart,
Her streets blood-flooded, and her plains
In boundless conflagration—
Instruct her poor benighted sons,
And save a sinking nation!

Shall we not lift the lowly,
Whom law and custom ban?
O help us to exalt and praise
God, in the mind of man!
Art thou a Man? Then, haste to aid,
Perchance, a sireless brother!
And in his parent, worn with want,
"O son! behold thy mother!"

Friends of the chain'd in spirit!
Set free our soul-bound slaves!
And a redeemed and thankful world
Shall smile upon your graves;
Age after age shall see your deeds
In useful beauty growing—
Still gathering strength to save and bless—
Like streams to ocean flowing.

Ye too, whose aims are selfish,
Who plough that ye may reap!
Come hither! here for harvest sow,
And give to get and keep!
Bless and be bless'd thou sordid son,
And thou more sordid father!
Plant gloom with light—and you and your's,
A thousandfold shall gather.

Like sunbeams to the moorland,
Or rest to weary wo,
Or silence to the Sabbath hills,
Your names will come and go;
Your worth, like Ewden, lingering
Around his hawthorn blossoms—
Or Stanage beckoning to his clouds—
Shall live in other bosoms.

CORN-LAW HYMNS.

To Mr Thomas Hodgkin, author of "Popular Political Economy," I dedicate these Corn-Law Hymns, with many thanks for his masterly work.

PREFACE.

If we are still to he cursed with Corn-Laws, and if no improvement is to be made in the condition

of Ireland, the squire-praised "moral restraint" of Messrs Malthus, Chalmers, Jeffrey, & Co., if acted upon, would produce the gradual but sure extinction of the English and Scotch people. Their place, it is true, would be supplied by Paddy, a fine fellow, who boasts that he has already tinged our language with the brogue. But will those considerate and comfortable saints and sages tell us what would be gained by the exchange? Do they really think that England and Scotland could be gainers by carefully draining from their veins every drop of the blood of Knox and Hampden, Locke and Watt? Are nations to be self-sacrificed without motive? No! rather let "the scourge of God," the law of population, become, in his hands, another Alaric! till the Monopolists and the Government fight for the taxes in right earnest. The landowners already cry, "Give us the Malt-Tax!" Their next cry will be, "Transfer to us all the Taxes! but touch not the Corn-Laws! As the National Debt was contracted for our supposed advantage, rob the public creditors for our sole benefit!" So shall those transfers and that robbery take from the public burdens not the weight of a single farthing.

But the worst symptom of the malady which is preying on the vitals of the body politic, is, the apathy with which our first-class merchants and manufacturers, and, I may add, the base middle classes generally, regard the insane and suicidal power which, straining the cord that binds us to fatal competition with our best friends, converts customers into rivals. Those self-robbed imitators and upholders of an aristocracy, that is sucking their blood like leeches, will not see, until it is too late, that the strikes and unions which they deprecate, are but the beginning of a resistance to the Corn-Laws, which is probably destined to bring down the roof of the social edifice on the heads of all. Are not the multitude rapidly learning, that organization is the art of war? And debased and degraded as they have been by long oppression, who is to assure us, and what right have we to expect, that they will not eventually apply their strategy—the most easily acquired, and the least intellectual of all knowledge—to other than squire-and-parson-pleasing purposes? In the meantime, the for-ever-lost and degraded Whigs, by refusing to untax knowledge, have withheld from the People the only means by which they could learn how to use, wisely and safely, the tremendous power which they could not now avoid possessing if they would.

Some of the Dirt-Kings—and among them, the great leader of the Breadtaxry—are raising a cry for paper-money. What do they mean by it? Do they really wish to receive sixpences for shillings? Or do they mean again to double their rents by a depreciation of the currency; and then, by again resuming cash payments, secure again their paper-rents in gold, and perpetrate another gigantic robbery on the People? But the People have not forgotten that, after the resumption of cash payments, manufactured goods fell in price fifty per cent.; that with those goods we bought the gold which was wanted for the purpose of resuming cash payments; and that, consequently, the depreciation in the value of those goods was equivalent to an advance of one hundred per cent. in the price of gold! Let the Breadtaxry then ask themselves, how cash payments could possibly have been resumed, if we had possessed nothing to buy gold with but our agricultural productions, even if there had been in this country (which there was not) a surplus of those productions? How much gold could they have purchased at Hamburgh with their wheat, realizing twenty shillings per quarter, after payment of the freight and other expenses? Supposing the purchase to have been made, what a luxury potatoes would have been to their mortgagees! The fact of the gold having been purchased, not with wheat, but with cottons, and woollens, and hardware, shews what a mighty engine trade is! and ought to shew our oppressors how hopeless will be their condition if they contrive to deprive us of that engine; for the capabilities of every artisan thrown permanently out of employment, may truly be said to represent the destruction of a capital of one thousand pounds, and the double incidence of that lost capital, acting destructively on all who have still anything left to lose! Who are they who threaten to destroy such capabilities? They are the worthies who declare, by act of Parliament, that they cannot, in their character of unproductive landed annuitants, secure their miserable two and a-half per cent., without taxing all productive interests eighty per cent., in the price of the productions of the soil! Let us then, first, measure their worth by the merchant's rule of barter, or reaction of discount. Take eighty from a hundred, and twenty remain. What is the per centage of the eighty upon the remaining twenty? It is four hundred! Let us next try them by the rule of three. If two and a-half require one hundred, what will eighty require? The answer is three thousand two hundred! What do those figures prove? That if the immediate results of the Corn-Laws to the consumers of corn are of a ruinous nature, incomparably more deadly still will be the reaction of those results on the fortunes of the landowners, unless they awake from their evil dream, before they have enabled our manufacturing rivals to take the lead in foreign markets. They prove that, in the unnatural position in which the Corn-Laws have placed us, trade is, after all, the only safe investment of capital in this country! for it is not only an unprotected interest, but it carries all the protected vermin on its back, and hitherto without stumbling! They prove, that nothing can save the mortgaged portion of the landowners from utter ruin but the doubling of the population and the trebling of its efficiency; and the hideous anxiety of those gentlemen to expatriate the People, proves how fully they are themselves convinced that Free Trade alone can effect those objects. Why then do they oppose Free Trade? Oh, it will be time enough to talk about Free Trade, when Chandos & Co. have devoured the Malt-Tax and the produce of all the other taxes. Besides, England, Scotland, and Wales, are not yet covered with potato-patches. When all the farmers are ruined by the Corn-Laws, we can still try the potato-patch system here: in the meantime, we can introduce it gradually!—and, in Ireland, we know that bayonet-tilled lands pay ten pounds a year rent per acre. Yes, and we also know who and what they are who ALONE pay for the bayonets! The agriculturists pay no taxes whatever; for we consume all their produce, and they are protected from competition by ten shillings per quarter freight, and the Corn-Laws besides. We, the manufacturers and tradesmen, pay all the taxes, to the last farthing, and have also to sustain a burthen, in the shape of a tax on food, which, in its consequences, costs us more than the amount of all the other taxes together. Then only, when the Corn-Laws are abolished, will the landowners begin to pay taxes; and they will not even then be taxed equally with the commercialists, unless a tax be laid on rent, equivalent in amount to the freight on imported corn.

CORN-LAW HYMNS.

No. I.

If he who kills the body
A murderer's death shall die;
If he who slays the human soul
Would hurl God from on high;
Then they who make our hopes, our lives,
Our children's souls their prey,
Unforgiven, loathed of heav'n,
In life and death are they;
Who kill the body and the soul,
But first the spirit slay!

Behold the flag of England,
In tyrant's battles rent!
We fought for Britain's locustry,
And, self-o'ercome, lament.
They summ'd their debt at Mont Saint Jean,
They paid at Peterloo,
With a yell that, in hell,
Turn'd meeker demons blue;
For we had crush'd their hated foe,
And England's freedom too!

No. II.

Lord! to the rose thy light and air
Impart the glory which they share;
To air's embrace her sweets she owes—
With morn's warm kiss her beauty glows:
Give us Freedom! Give us Freedom! Free Trade.

Hark! how it floats the vale along!
'Tis music's voice! 'tis Nature's song!
It charms the woods, the rocks, the skies;
And, hark! how echo's soul replies!
Give us Freedom! &c.

The lone flower hears the skylark sing,
And trembles like his raptured wing;
But pays the song that cheer'd and bless'd,
With dewdrops, shed beside his nest.
Give us Freedom! &c.

The wild bird bears the foodful seed
To farthest wilds, where birds would feed;
Lo! food springs up where hunger died,
And beauty clothes the desert wide!
Give us Freedom! &c.

Streams trade with clouds, seas trade with heav'n,
Air trades with light, and is forgiv'n;
While man would make all climes his own,
But, chain'd by man, laments alone.
Give us Freedom! &c.

Where torrid climes intensely glow,
Lo, trade buys gold with polar snow!
Then let Bourdeaux hire Glasgow's loom,
And in our hearts Gaul's vintage bloom!
Give us Freedom! &c.

Thy winds, O God! are free to blow;
Thy streams are free to chime and flow;
Thy clouds are free to roam the sky;
Let man be free his arts to ply!
Give us Freedom! &c.

The fiends would chain the winds and sea,
Who famish men and libel thee;
Lord! give us hope! O banish fear!
"From every face wipe every tear!"
Give us Freedom! &c.

No. III.

"Wrong not the poor," ye mighty,
"For God will plead their cause!"
The prayer of curses "God will hear,
And judge ye by your laws."
Your evil deeds "will fight for them
Whose labour is their life."
For the right, in their might,
They will meet you in the strife,
With "God for us!" and "wrath for you,
Who take our bread, our life!"

No. IV.

Father! thy nation-girding seas
Obey alike the storm and breeze,
To clasp us all in one embrace!
Not sever wide our social race!

To feed not famish human-kind
Was labour'd land by thee designed!
To yield us food! not tax our bread,
And libel thee with mouths unfed!

Yet prosper they who curse the soil
Ordained to feed the sons of toil!
They who make pain of sun and rain—
Of seas and winds a dungeon chain!

God of the poor! shall labour eat?
Or drones alone find labour sweet?
Lo! they who call thy earth their own,
Take all we have—and give a stone!

"They toil not, neither do they spin,"
But call us names of shame and sin;
Eat e'en our lives, our very graves!
And make our unborn children slaves!

No. V.

Seest thou, O God! our deadly strife,
Our war for bread, for life, for life?
How like the war of seas and skies,
When struggling thousands fall and rise!

On howling foam and tossing wave
The rich and poor, the lord and slave,
Float like frail shells, amid the shocks
Of senseless logs and solid rocks.

What though, at times, the sun looks down,
Through shatter'd clouds, on ocean's frown?
Though rocks may scorn the sea and sky,
While logs are safe, and navies die?

Can sunlit surge or sunlit shore
Cheer them who shriek in ocean's roar?
Lord! what avails the transient blue
That smiles on storm and shipwreck too?

Ah, what avails the dying might
That struggles still, through gloom and light,
If in them both we feel and see
The might of fatal prophecy?

The sun that shines from deadly skies,
No comfort brings to him who dies:
A torch may glare in jail or tomb,
But chains are chains, and doom is doom.

Then wherefore say thy foes and our's,
That good is wrought by evil powers?
"Behold," they cry, "our wealth, our bliss!
What land," they ask, "can vie with this?"

Still plant they thorns that flowers may grow,
To lift the high still crush the low;
And scorn the cloud which, splendour-nurs'd,
Frowns o'er their pomp, and longs to burst.

No. VI.

Lord! call thy pallid angel—
The tamer of the strong!
And bid him whip with want and wo
The champions of the wrong!
O say not thou to Ruin's flood,
"Up Sluggard! why so slow?"
But alone let them groan,
The lowest of the low;
And basely beg the bread they curse,
Where millions curse them now!

No; wake not thou the giant
Who drinks hot blood for wine;
And shouts unto the east and west,
In thunder-tones like thine;
Till the slow to move rush all at once,
An avalanche of men,
While he raves over waves
That need no whirlwind then;
Though slow to move, mov'd all at once,
A sea, a sea of men!

No. VII.

Kill not the flower that feeds the useful bee;
For more than beauteous is that sweet flower's blush:
'Tis toil's reward that sweetens industry,
As love inspires with strength th'enraptur'd thrush.

To fall'n humanity our Father said,
That food and bliss should not be found unsought;
That man should labour for his daily bread;
But not that man should toil and sweat for nought.

Not that the best should live a living death,
To give the worst a beastly sense of life;
And waste in servitude their fleeting breath,
Waging with care and want a hopeless strife.

No. VIII.

Lord! bid our palaced worms their vileness know,
Bleach them with famine, till they earn their bread!
And, taught by pain to feel a brother's wo,
Marvel that honest labour toils unfed!

They never felt how vain it is to seek
From bread-taxed trade its interdicted gain;
How hard to toil, from dreary week to week,
And ever-labouring, labour still in vain.

They never heard their children's grim despair
Cry, "Give us work, ere want and death prevail!"
Then seek in crime, or in desponding prayer,
A refuge from the breadtax-crowded jail.

They never saw the matron's breaking heart
Break slowly o'er her son's desponding sigh;
Nor watch'd her hopeless mate, when glad to part
From all he lov'd and left beneath the sky.

They heed not, though the widow wrings her hands
Above her wo-worn husband's nameless grave,
When her last boy departs for distant lands,
Rather than live, or die, a bread-tax'd slave.

But, Lord, thou hearest when the sufferer cries!
Thou markest when the honest heart is rent!
Thou heedest when the broken-hearted dies!
And thou wilt pardon—when thy foes repent.

Then, let them kneel—oh, not to us, but thee!
For judgment, Lord, to thee alone belongs!
But we are petrified with misery,
And turn'd to marble by a life of wrongs.

No. IX.

The present, future, past,
What are they, Lord, but thee?
Thou art, and ever wast,
What hath been and will be.

Thou only seest the sun
To which slow ages tend—
And art the Unbegun,
Which is, and cannot end.

The generations gone,
What are they but a word?
All, all that all have done,
Is but thy whisper, Lord.

The deeds which, in old song,
Like stars of morning shine,
Are accents from thy tongue—
Unwritten words of thine.

Before thee, Homer's name,
Ere Greece was named, went forth;
And, like a word of flame,
Glared Alaric from the North.

Methinks I hear thy voice,
Prophetic, at this hour—
Where evil powers rejoice,
And worship evil power.

A word of fatal tone,
The blind shall hear and see;
A word of fire unblown
On them shall written be.

Lo! things of earth combine
To curse the blessed sod!
Bid God his power resign!
And clench their fists at God

And dreadful art thou, Lord,
Thy words are dreadful then,
When men make law a sword,
To smite the rights of men!

The dust of patriots dead
Hears then thy stillest tones;
Pale tyrants, waxing red,
Crouch frighted on their thrones;

For wrongs go forth in might,
Like whirlwind on the sea;
When vengeance strikes for right,
What is he, Lord, but thee?

No. X.

Behold, O Lord! the worms that bind,
In loathsome bonds, the sea and wind!
To reign like death, and frown alone,
Those worms would overturn thy throne.

Teach them—but not too sternly teach—
That each on all, and all on each,
Depend alike, for weal or wo,
Because the Lord hath will'd it so.

O give thy toil-redeemer birth!
Let slaves be men! enfranchise earth!
Let commerce plough unchain'd the main,
That sinking hope may rise again!

No. XI.

Could Love divine, and boundless Might,
Bid sailless worlds plough seas of light,
That pride might gloat on servile forms,
And reptiles feast on angel worms?
No! Let all lands exchange with all
The good which freights this foodful ball;
Then will the strife of millions cease;
For Free Exchange is Peace! is Peace!

No. XII.

Star!—brightest far of all that beam
O'er nightly hill, on wood and stream!—
Fair is thy light o'er wilds afar,
And lovely is thy silence, Star!
How calm thou art! while forests rave,
And tempests wing the groaning wave.

What hand unseen hath rent thy shroud?
Black rolls on high the broken cloud:
Lo! Care walks here, with troubled eye,
To chase thee through the hurried sky!
Why, what art thou? A world, like this,
Of weeping toil and fleeting bliss?

A world where wretches curse their birth,
And whence they eye the bread-tax'd earth—
A star to them, as thou to me?
Then, frantic in their misery,
Wish they could mount the maneless wind,
To leave their woes and thee behind?

O for my mother's wormy bed!
Would I were as the dust I tread!
That me no more might power enthrall,
And weave for Hope a funeral pall!
Or lawless law, his helpless slave
Fling, shrieking, over rock and wave!

Then, gentle earth! to this sad heart
Envenom'd fangs no more would dart!
But oft, with many a cherished tear,
A form of grace might visit here;
And oft bend o'er her poet's stone,
Like a torn willow all alone.

Star! would'st thou then make haste to streak,
Through widowed locks, a wither'd cheek,
And on her forehead, once so fair,
In shadow, paint her faded hair?
O for repose! my soul is press'd
Down, down to earth, and yearns for rest.

No. XIII.

What means that mighty shadow
Of horror and of doom?
O tells it now of ruin past,
Or ruin yet to come?
It spreads its wings o'er humbled things,
Most haughty once of all!
With a frown that shakes down
Pride's greatness ere it fall—
Destroyers! lo, it beckons—lo!
On you it seems to call!

No. XIV.

Wrong not the labouring poor by whom ye live!
Wrong not your humble fellow-worms, ye proud!
For God will not the poor man's wrongs forgive,
But hear his plea, and have his plea allowed.

O be not like the vapours, splendour-roll'd,
That, sprung from earth's green breast, usurp the sky,
Then spread around contagion black and cold,
Till all who mourn the dead prepare to die!

No! imitate the bounteous clouds, that rise,
Freighted with bliss, from river, vale, and plain;
The thankful clouds, that beautify the skies,
Then fill the lap of earth with fruit and grain.

Yes! emulate the mountain and the flood,
That trade in blessings with the mighty deep;
Till, soothed to peace, and satisfied with good,
Man's heart be happy as a child asleep.

No. XV.

Oh, better thus be lowly laid,
Than live, with sorrow worn,
To say, while life's best visions fade,
"The happy are unborn!"

Outliving all respect, to rue
Cold Rapine's scorn, and scorn it too!
Or pity, worse than scorn!
To find in every friend a foe!
And see affection fly from wo!

No. XVI.

The locustry of Britain
Are gods beneath the skies;
They stamp the brave into the grave;
They feed on Famine's sighs;
They blight all homes, they break all hearts,
Except, alas, their own!
While a moan and a groan,
That move th' Almighty's throne,
Bring angels' tears in pity down,
And move the' Eternal throne!

The breadtaxry of England,
What awful powers they are!
They make a league with Want and Crime!
On Plenty they wage war!
They curse the land, the winds, the seas;
Lord! have they conquer'd thee?
With a frown, looking down,
While they curse the land and sea,
They rival hell, and libel heav'n,
But have not vanquish'd thee.

No. XVII.

Lord! not for vengeance rave the wrong'd,
The withering hopes, the woes prolong'd!
Our cause is just, our Judge divine;
But judgment, God of all! is thine.
We call not on thy foes the doom
That scourged the proud of wretched Rome,
Who stole, for few, the lands of all,
To make all life a funeral.
But not in vain thy millions call
On thee, if thou art Lord of all;
And, by thy works, and by thy word,
Hark! millions cry for justice, Lord!

No. XVIII.

The gnat sings through its little day;
The tiniest weeds, how glad are they!
Man only lives, on tears and sighs,
A living death before he dies!

Yet while the tax-gorged lords of land
Blast toil's stout heart, and skill's right hand,
We curse not them who curse the soil;
We only ask for "leave to toil!"

For labour food—to us our own;
For woven wool, a mutton bone;
A little rest, a little corn,
For weary man, to trouble born!

But not the sneer of them we feed!
Their workhouse graves! their chains for need!
The dying life of blighted flowers!
And early death for us and our's!

We only ask to toil and eat!
But hungrier men with us compete;
For they who tax our bread, and smile,
Deprive of bread our sister isle!

No. XIX.

Snail-slow to good, when mischief calls, ye haste,
Artificers of poverty and crime!
In worse than sloth your baleful days ye waste,
And turn to bane God's best gifts—mind and time!

Does law-made robbery want a base defence?
O'er fraud and force a brother's cloak ye throw:
Does hors'd Corruption ride o'er Innocence?
Yet gild the blood-stain'd hoof that lays her low.

And reignest thou, O God! while gods like these
Reverse thy laws and mock thy slumbering ire,
Till the plagued State becomes one vast disease,
Whose horrid ulcers vomit blood and fire?

No. XX.

THE UNWRITTEN WORD.

Hast thou not spoken, God,
When wrongs unchain the slave;
And slaves make every sod
A slave's or tyrant's grave?

Dost thou not speak to all,
When names, made bright by thee,
Blaze comet-like, and fall
From heaven to obloquy?

How like a trumpet's blast,
By thee in whirlwind blown,
Thy stern Napoleon past
Through shrieks of states o'erthrown!

What crush'd him, disarray'd,
When perish'd man and steed?
Thy outraged laws of trade!
They crush'd him, like a weed!

A voice of many sighs,
Woe's still small voice of doom,
Whisper'd!—and seas and skies
Sang, "Lo, the Island-Tomb!"

For hosts, of many tongues,
That voice array'd in might;
A universe of wrongs
Arm'd wrongers for the right.

But curs'd by battles won,
What learn'd they, triumph-taught?
That victory, self-undone,
Hath lost the fight unfought.

Napoleon could not shake
What pigmies have o'erthrown!
O outraged England, wake!
O Nature, claim thy own!

When shall we hear again
Thy still small whisper, God?
O break the bondman's chain!
Uncurse the tax-plough'd sod!

If still thy name is love,
Be Labour's sons thy care!
And from thy earth remove
The vermin all can spare.

Deaf reptiles they devour
The honey and the tree,
Root, branches, fruit, and flower;
But not our trust in thee!

RHYMED RAMBLES.

In Three Parts.

PREFACE.

If Mr Housman of Lune Banks had not sent me a copy of his collection of English sonnets, I should have been the author of one sonnet only. I never liked the measure of the legitimate or Petrarchan sonnet. There is a disagreeable break in the melody, after the eighth line. That Milton felt this, is proved by the fact, that he frequently ran the eighth line into the ninth, contrary to law.

Nor can I agree with Mr Housman, that a sonnet ending with a couplet is therefore faulty; on the contrary, a couplet at the close of a sonnet has often a fine effect. So thought and so proved Cowper, and our elder poets; and there are in Mr Housman's collection five most harmonious, yet not Petrarchan sonnets, by Fitzadam, composed of three elegiac stanzas and a couplet, all disconnected in rhyme, but not in metre; which fully shew that the measure of the sonnet, as he has managed it, is as proper for a long and serious poem as the Spenserian stanza itself.

The sonnet, I believe, has become popular in those languages only in which it is more difficult to avoid similar rhymes than to find them. The Spenserian stanza, requiring four rhymes, is quite as difficult as the Petrarchan sonnet, the latter being little more than a series of couplets and triplets; and I venture to suggest that—preceded by five lines, linked to it in melody, and concluding occasionally with an Alexandrine—or preceded by four lines only, if concluding with a triplet—the far-famed measure of Spenser is the best which the English sonneteer can employ. Of this the reader may judge for himself; as, in these sonnets, (if sonnets they are,) I have used the legitimate, the Spenserian, and other forms.

Part First.

TO G. C. HOLLAND, M. D.

Holland! thou lov'st the little songful lyre,
On which, well-pleased thy bidding to obey,
For the first time, I now attempt to play,
Fretting, with skilless touch, the sonnet's wire.
Alas! the strings of this small harp require,
To bring forth half their worth, a master's hand!
Yet, as I wander through a lovely land,
And stop, at times, its marvels to admire,
May I not sing them too? Yea, while the breeze,
Sighing o'er moated grange, or castle bold,
Awakes the music of their ancient trees,
The lyre, belov'd of bards whose fires re cold,
That sweetest lyre I'll place before my knees,
And make my theme the wonders I behold.

POWERS OF THE SONNET.

Why should the tiny harp be chain'd to themes
In fourteen lines with pedant rigour bound?
The sonnet's might is mightier than it seems:
Witness the bard of Eden lost and found,
Who gave this lute a clarion's battle sound.
And, lo! another Milton calmly turns
His eyes within on light that ever burns,
Waiting till Wordsworth's second peer be found!
Meantime, Fitzadam's mournful music shews
That the scorn'd sonnet's charm may yet endear
Some long deep strain, or lay of well-told woes;
Such as, in Byron's couplet, brings a tear
To manly cheeks, or o'er his stanza throws
Rapture and grief, solemnity and fear.

EUGENE ARAM.

Knaresbro'! thou wilt be famous through all time,
Because poor Aram's history imparts
A dreadful unsolv'd riddle to all hearts—
A half-told secret, in its gloom sublime,
Though trite and common are death, want, and crime!
But Bulwer, o'er thy caverns, rocks, and trees,
Throws the deep charm of thoughtful melodies,
Heart cherish'd, like a dim cathedral's chime.
That charm will live when rock-built towers decay—
That charm, when rocks themselves are turn'd to dust,
Will to the slanderers of the great and just,
And the grim ghost of buried envy, say—
"Though Time hath plough'd your graves and ground thy bust,
I am not of the things which pass away."

PLUMPTON.

Who would not here become a hermit? here
Grow old in song? here die, on Nature's breast,
Hush'd, like yon wild bird on the lake, to rest?
Then laid asleep beneath the branches sere,
Till the Awakener in the east appear,
And call the dead to judgment? Quietness,
Methinks the heart-whole rustic loves thee less
Than the town's thought-worn smiler. Oh! most dear
Art thou to him who flies from care to bowers
That breathe of sainted calmness! and, to me,
More welcome than the breath of hawthorn flowers
To children of the city, when delight
Leads them from smoke to cowslips, is the sight
Of these green shades, those rocks, this little sea.

BOLTON ABBEY.

Spirits of wonder, loveliness, and fear,
Dwell in these groves, beneath o'er-arching trees,
With the dim presence of their mysteries
Haunting the rocks and mountain shadows near:

They pass the lone enthusiast, wandering here,
By strangled Wharfe, or Barden's ancient tower;
Pass him, nor shake a dew-drop from a flower,
But with their whispers soothe his soul-taught ear,
As with a dream of prayer; until he starts,
Awaken'd from deep thoughts of Time's calm might
And Nature's beauty, and in awe departs;—
When, to the Abbey's moonlight-tinted walls,
The demon of the spectred river calls,(a)
Mock'd by the voices of mysterious night.

THE VICARAGE.

The Vicar's house is smother'd in its roses,
His garden glows with dahlias large and new;
"Bees murmur in his limes the summer through;"
And on the seat beneath them often dozes
A better man than Calumny supposes.
His living is three hundred pounds a-year;
"But not of servants, wife, and children clear."
He gives away his common right and closes,
And keeps no horse. When winter strips the tree,
To poor men's homes his wife and daughters go,
With needful gifts of flannel, food, or fire,
And made-wines for the sick. Now, would not he,
Who deem'd the labourer worthy of his hire,
Have paid it to this faithful servant?—No.

POET *v.* PARSON.

A hireling's wages to the priest are paid;
While lives and dies, in want and rags, the bard!
But preaching ought to be its own reward,
And not a sordid, if an honest, trade.
Paul, labouring proudly with his hands, array'd
Regenerated hearts in peace and love;
And when, with power, they preach'd the mystic dove,
Penn, Barclay, Clarkson, ask'd not Mammon's aid.
As, for its own sake, poetry is sweet
To poets—so, on tasks of mercy bound,
Religion travels with unsandalled feet,
Making the flinty desert holy ground;
And never will her triumph be complete
While one paid pilgrim upon earth is found.

BRIMHAM ROCKS.

Rocks! sacred deem'd to eldest fraud, when fear
First darken'd death's reality with dreams!
The spirit of your cruel worship seems,
Like a wolf's shadow, yet to linger here,
Deepening the gloom with peril still too near;
For guile and knowledge long have been allied,
Most pious found when preaching blasphemies,
Most treacherous when most trusted. But the year,
Whose seasons are all winters, soon must close;
Knowledge hath join'd the millions; and mankind
Are learning to distinguish friends from foes;
The eagle-eyed give sight unto the blind;
The eagle-wing'd are chasing crime-made woes;
The mighty-voiced are heard in every wind.

TREES AT BRIMHAM.

Gnarl'd oak and holly! stone-cropp'd like the stone!
Are ye of it, or is it part of you?
Your union strange is marvellously true,
And makes the granite, which I stand upon,
Seem like the vision of an empire gone—
Gone, yet still present, though it never was,
Save as a shadow—let the shadow pass!
So perish human glories, every one!
But Rocks! ye are not shadows; Trees! ye cast
Th' Almighty's shadow o'er the homeward bee,
His name on Brimham! yea, the coming blast,
Beneath his curtains, reads it here with me;
And pauses not to number marvels past,
But speeds the thunder on o'er land and sea.

ROCK IDOL AT BRIMHAM.

Stone! did the hand of sacerdotal fraud
Shape thee into this vital type of things?
Or did a million winters, on their wings
Of scythe-like perseverance come abroad,
To bid Conjecture stand before thee awed,
And, almost severing thee from parent-earth,
Make thee a marvel? Vainly giv'st thou birth
To solemn fancies, building an abode
Around thee, for a world of shapeless ghosts;
Vainly they rise before me, calling up
Kings and their masters, and imagined hosts
That fight for clouds. What then? The heath-flower's cup
With dew-drops feeds this fountain ever clear,
And the wing'd ouzel whistles—"God is here!"

STUDLEY.

Behold! the Medicean Venus! O
Is not this beauty? Yes, for it is truth.
See how she bends in her eternal youth!
E'en thus she charm'd ten thousand years ago;
Ere painting's magic bade the canvass glow,
Or soul inspir'd the marble; thus she stood
Before her own Adonis of the wood!
The master-piece of sculpture? Artist! No.
In all divine perfection as she stands,
So came she, perfect, from th' Almighty's hands,
The masterpiece of Nature. Everywhere
His spirit walks; but he who in strange lands
Seeks her fair form, turns homeward in despair,
Then seeks it in his soul, and finds it there.

CRITICISM.

Yet art hath less of instinct than of thought,
All instinct tho' it seems; for as the flower
Which blooms in solitude, by noiseless power,
And skill divine, is wonderfully wrought,
So from deep study art's high charm is caught;
And as the sunny air, and dewy light,
Are spun in heavenly looms, till blossoms, bright
With honeyed wealth and sweetness, droop o'er-fraught,
And our eyes breathe of beauty; so the bard
Wrings from slow time inimitable grace;
So wins immortal music her reward,

E'en with a bee's industry; and we trace
The sculptor's home-thoughts thro' his labours hard,
Till beams, with deathless love, the chisell'd face.

FOUNTAIN'S ABBEY.

Abbey! for ever smiling pensively,
How like a thing of Nature dost thou rise,
Amid her loveliest works! as if the skies,
Clouded with grief, were arch'd thy roof to be,
And the tall trees were copied all from thee!
Mourning thy fortunes—while the waters dim,
Flow like the memory of thy evening hymn;
Beautiful in their sorrowing sympathy;
As if they with a weeping sister wept,
Winds name thy name! But thou, though sad, art calm,
And time with thee his plighted troth hath kept;
For harebells deck thy brow, and, at thy feet,
Where sleep the proud, the bee and red-breast meet,
Mixing thy sighs with Nature's lonely psalm.

PARTING TEARS.

Scenes, which renew my youth, and wake again
Its earliest dreams of love and beauty!—here,
E'en as in heaven, found perfect, though the tear
Of frailty dims them with its earthly stain
Too often and too soon! I can remain
With you no longer; I must haste to things
That drink the ice, which in a moment brings
The chill of fifty winters, and their pain,
To the sick heart. Already I grow cold
In spirit; and the thought of leaving you
For alien scenes, where nothing good or new
Remains for crowds to shew, or men to say,
Instructs me—not that I in years am old,
But that the tresses of my soul are gray.

RETURN TO SHEFFIELD.

To swelter in the town's distemper'd glow,
Heart-sick to sleep, and weary wake to strife,
To make a curse of hope, a broil of life,
And blight the rose to bid the cypress grow,
Pain's angel calls me; and I rise to go
Back from the castled wood, the sainted tower—
Scenes where man's home is lovely as a flower,
And he himself still fair, though stain'd with wo!
Where Nid, and Aire, and Wharfe through Eden glide,
Or Brimham's rocks of Druid terrors tell,
No longer, little lyre, may I abide;
No more with Nature's lonely powers to dwell,
I leave thee here on Skell's all-beauteous side;
Toy of the Titans! tiny Harp, farewell!

Part Second.

TO THOMAS LISTER.

Bard of the Future! as the morning glows
O'er lessening shadows, shine thou in this land.
Till the rich drone pays Labour what he owes,
"Strive unto death" against his plundering hand;
And bid the temple of free conscience stand,
Roof'd by the sky, for ever. "As the rose,
Growing beside the streamlet of the field,"
Send sweetness forth on every breeze that blows;
Bloom like the woodbines where the linnets build;
Be to the mourner as the clouds, that shield,
With wings of meeken'd flame, the summer flower;
Still, in thy season, beautifully yield
The seeds of beauty; sow eternal power;
And wed eternal truth! though suffering be her dower.

Don whispers audibly; but Wharncliffe's dread,
Like speechless adoration, hymns the Lord;
While, smiting his broad lyre, with thunder stored,
He makes the clouds his harp-strings. Gloom is spread
O'er Midhope, gloom o'er Tankersley, with red
Streak'd; and noon's midnight silence doth afford
Deep meanings, like the preaching of the Word
To dying men. Then, let thy heart be fed
With honest thoughts; and be it made a lyre,
That God may wake its soul of living fire,
And listen to the music. O do thou,
Minstrel serene! to useful aims aspire!
And, scorning idle men and low desire,
Look on our father's face with meek submitted brow.

Yes, Lister! bear to him who toils and sighs
The primrose and the daisy, in thy rhyme;
Bring to his workshop odorous mint and thyme;
Shine like the stars on graves, and say, Arise,
Seed sown in sorrow! that our Father's eyes
May see "the bright consummate flower" of mind;
And the great heart of ransom'd human kind
Sing in all homes the anthem of the wise:
"Freedom is peace! Knowledge is Liberty!
Truth is religion." O canst thou refuse
To emulate the glory of the sun,
That feedeth ocean from the earth-fed sky;
And to the storm, and to the rain-cloud's hues,
Saith, "All that God commandeth shall be done!"

THE CHAINED EAGLE.

Slow Time seems swift. Since Charles stood here with me
Three years have pass'd o'er Wharncliffe's wood and stream;
And Charles is busy still, where'er he be,
Willing to labour, if he may but dream.
Poor Pemberton! the forest speaks of thee;
The eagles? No; they dwell with other things; [b]
But he who caged them here, though chain'd, is free,
And might do better for us, with his wings,
Then flap his mental bonds, to flatter kings.
When will he fly away, and be at rest?
Can he roll back the ocean to its springs?
Ye chained in soul! what *must* be, shall be best:
To Space and Time, their food Improvement brings;
"We dwell with God in both," Obstruction's poet sings.

CASTLE HOWARD.

Palfreyman! hither, with toil-strengthened frame,
What time Napoleon warred on Russian snows,
I came, a wanderer's privilege to claim,
And gaze on deathless death, and deathless woes.
The soul of truth glowed then, as now it glows,
O'er all the life and glory of these walls;
Ideal Power, in pomp of gloom and flame,
Called on my spirit then as now he calls:
"Do not my sons," he said, "deserve their fame?"
I could not scorn his bright star-written name,
Though, in her majesty heart-deified,
A beauteous friend, all graceful, with me came;
Yet I turn'd from him with a husband's pride,
And blessed the LIVING WOMAN at my side.

THE THREE MARYS AT CASTLE HOWARD, IN 1812 AND 1837.

The lifeless son—the mother's agony,
O'erstrained till agony refused to feel—
That sinner too I *then* dry-eyed could see;
For I was harden'd in my selfish weal,
And strength and joy had strung my soul with steel.
I knew not then that man may live to be
A thing of life, that feels he lives in vain—
A taper, to be quench'd in misery!
Forgive me, then, Caracci! if I seek
To look on this, thy tale of tears, again;
For now the swift is slow, the strong is weak.
Mother of Christ! how merciful is pain!
But, if I longer view thy tear-stain'd cheek,
Heart-broken Magdalene! my heart will break.

WALKLEY.

Sarah and William Adams! here we stood,
Roof'd by the cloud, which cast his frown between
Wardsend and Loxley's moorlands. From the wood
Of one-starr'd Grenno, like a sea unseen,
The wind swept o'er us, seeming, in his might,
To shake the steadfast rocks; while, rushing keen
Beyond the edge of darkness, stormy light,
As from a league-wide trumpet, on the scene
A cataract of glory pour'd; and, bright
In gloom, the hill-tops islanded the night
Of billowy shade around us. Vale and hill,
Forest and cloud, were restless as a fight;
They seemed as they would never more be still;
While, anchor'd over all, the high-pois'd kite
Saw the foam'd rivers dash their blue with white.

WORDS AND THINGS.

Our wordy friend in metaphor transcends
All mortal scribes—his figures always strike!
And when he makes of far-sought odds and ends
Pictures of *nothing*, wonderfully like,
He calls them "THOUGHTS that startle!" Evening blends
Green with her red and purple with her gold;
And, while yon all-hued sun-born rainbow bends
O'er blush-tinged peak, cragged glen, and shadowed wold,
Harmonized melodies in light are rolled
Wherever lake reflects her dying beam,
Or mourns in Eden sad-voiced breeze, or stream,
Or showery cloud! but ne'er will man behold
The truth of beauty in a pedant's dream,
Cold as his sympathies, and false as cold.

MOSOLEUM AT WENTWORTH.

Hither I came—when life itself was new,
And new this form of greatness dead and gone—
To tremble in the gloom which draws and drew
A purple veil o'er deathlike life in stone.
This man a pitying look on frailty threw:
Have I not heard a matron, good and true,
Speak of him, with a tear upon her cheek? [weak?
Knaves call'd him weak—but when was virtue
O ye who wring the heart until it break,
And scourge pale nations with the wealth ye steal!
Here, if late pardon for your crimes ye seek,
To your cold souls the thoughts ye dread reveal;
Think of our vulture with the gory beak! [speak.
And of meek Rockingham, with humbled malice,

WENTWORTH HOUSE.

"Now, for the enchanted palace of our youth!"
But what have I with palaces to do,
Taught as I am, by Nature, time, and truth,
That pride can envy pomp, and hate it too?
Yes; but the ideal of the fair and true
Lives here in marble, by creative mind
Made sacred to the glory of mankind;
And if ideal beauty cannot woo
Thy steps to enter Taste's proud temple—Go!
Yet, wherefore? Wentworth's princely halls can shew,
By Vandyke limned, the form of one who knew
How best to strike a tyrant's basest blow.
Behold him! nor to curse his crimes be slow—
Behold fell Strafford! man's and freedom's foe!

PORTRAIT AT WENTWORTH.

Was he then human? Tools of Tyrants! could
This face be Strafford's? Stafford's! who his hands
Wrung in Hibernia's hair, and, drunk with blood,
Call'd murder wisdom! Brutal as his bands,
He startl'd hell with crime. His savage mood
Nor pity sooth'd, nor reason's might could bow.
But Hampden dar'd withstand him, Pym withstood;
And men were found who laid his master low,
And sent the servant—whither tyrants go.
And, lo, at length, strange pangs his heart have riven!
There is a touch of feeling on his brow,
"For pledges left him by a saint in heav'n."
No more than this, could royal Charles allow?
"Put not your trust in princes!" Why didst thou?

BUST AND PORTRAIT AT WENTWORTH.

This bust, which beautifully doth relate
What heav'n's belov'd are born to do and be;
These lines, these hues, which long shall renovate
Thy gentleness, thy truth, thy purity;

Are all, Fitzwilliam ! that remain of thee.
The steward of the trampled poor is gone !
The prince of charity hath bow'd to fate !
The godlike friend of him that wanteth one,
Finds good deeds done on earth his best estate.
How long for thee God bade his angel wait !
O reverend brow ! thou conquerest Envy's frown,
And dead, half-humanizest Faction's hate ;
As when a poet of time-tried renown
Casts o'er the world he left the light of suns gone down.

THRYBERG.

Scenes of my thoughtless youth ! here are ye all ;
Dalton ! and Dalton school ! and Dalton Deign !
But chang'd ye are ! or I am. Mean and small
Ye seem, and humbled. Sunk into the plain,
The hill is dwarf'd with age. Its coronal
The glen hath lost, its ferny plumes, and, more
Than these, its freedom ! Thryberg's verdant wall
Is here, and here the oak I knew of yore ;
But who, to me, their grandeur can restore ?
My heart hath made them bankrupt. Where they stood
Stand Wentworth's halls ; but not, as heretofore,
Portall'd for gods. O far-known Silverwood !
O cavern'd Ravensfield ! Don, flowing o'er
A narrower bed, bathes now a tamer shore.

PROSPECT FROM THRYBERG.

Thou only, Wincobank, reign'st undespoiled,
King of the valley of my youth and prime,
Through which the river, like a snake uncoil'd,
Wanders, though tam'd, a match for conquering time.
Behind thee mountains, solemn and sublime,
Take from the stooping skies their purply gold ;
And could I in that brightness steep my rhyme,
And steal yon glow of green and crimson, roll'd
Far o'er the realms of evening's western clime,
A tale of Nature's splendour should be told
Which Byron might transcribe for Scott, and deem
That earth, like heav'n, hath scenes which grow not old :
O let me dip my pencil in thy beam,
Thou setting sun ! ere death cut short this fever'd dream.

RETROSPECTION.

World of my boyhood ! art thou what thou wast ?
Seen through the melancholy mist of years,
Thy woods a pale diminish'd shadow cast
O'er thoughts grown gray, and feelings dimm'd with tears.
Our spirits, biggen'd by their griefs and fears,
Sadden and dwindle, with their backward view,
All they behold. Chang'd world ! thy face appears
Poor as the toy that pleas'd when life was new ;
And mournful as th' inscription, trite and true,
That lingers on our little sister's grave.
Roch Abbey ! Canklow ! Aldwark ! if I crave,
Now, a boy's joy, from some lone flower's deep blue,
Will your lov'd flowers assume a pensive hue ?
Or smile as once they smil'd, still growing where they grew ?

ROCH ABBEY.

Pale ruin ! no—they come no more, the days
When thought was like a bee within a rose,
Happier and busier than the beam that plays
On this thy stream. The stream sings, as it flows,
A song of valleys, where the hawthorn blows ;
And wanderings through a world of flowery ways,
Even as of old ; but never will it bring
Back to my heart my guileless love of praise.—
The blossomy hours of life's all-beauteous spring,
When joy and hope were ever on the wing,
Chasing the redstart for its flamy glare,
The corn-craik for its secret. Who can wring
A healing balsam from the dregs of care,
And turn to auburn curls the soul's gray hair ?

Yet, Abbey ! pleased, I greet thee once again ;
Shake hands, old friend, for I in soul am old.
But storms assault thy golden front in vain ;
Unchang'd thou seem'st, though times are chang'd and cold ;
While to thy side I bring a man of pain,
With youthful cheeks in furrows deep and wide,
Plough'd up by Fortune's volley'd hail and rain ;
To truth a martyr, hated and belied ;
Of freedom's cause a champion true and tried.
O take him to thy heart ! for Pemberton
Loves thee and thine, *because* your might hath died—
Because thy friends are dead, thy glories gone—
Because, like him, thy batter'd walls abide
A thousand wrongs, and smile at power and pride.

O bid him welcome then ! and let his eyes
Look on thy beauty, until blissful tears
Flood the deep channels, worn by agonies,
Which leave a wreck more sad than that of years.
Yes ; let him see the evening-purpl'd skies,
Above thy glowing lake bend down to thee ;
And the love-list'ning vesper-star arise,
Slowly, o'er silent earth's tranquillity ;
And all thy ruins weeping silently ;
Then, be his weakness pitied and forgiv'n,
If, when the moon illumes her deep blue sea,
His soul could wish to dream of thee in heav'n,
And, with a friend his bosom'd mate to be,
Wander through endless years, by silver'd arch and tree.

Part Third

TO ELIZABETH.

"Write me a song for Betsy," said thy sire :
Lady ! it is already written—here,
On the charged brain, in tears, and gloom, and fire :
Read it when I am dust. My waning year
Is shaking down its leaves. I soon shall be
Safe, even from myself, where pain and fear
Disturb not him who sleepeth. Then to thee
The buried dead shall speak, and thou shalt hear
A spirit's voiceless words. He shall appear
To thee when awe is silence in thy soul—
Yea, thou with him shalt go withersoe'er
His feet have been. The lifeless shall control
The living : and, tho' worlds between us roll,
Dwell with thee in my thoughts, or linger near.

Then, lady! gaze with me o'er Wharncliffe lone;
Or stand, in thought, on Kinder's crest sublime;
Or hear a prophet's voice, from Grina stone,
Denounce thy country's tyrants, in my rhyme.
O that Peronnet Thompson's mental might,
Or thy stern lyre, John Milton, were my own;
Or that my voice were mountain thunders, blown,
As from a trumpet, in the dead of night!
Then would I do the poor of Britain right;
Then should my song, like Russia's winter, freeze
Abaddon's host, guilt-petrified in flight;
And the roused spirit of Demosthenes,
Strong as heaven's flame from tempests ranged for fight,
Fulmine o'er darkened lands a storm of light.

"My voice," men say, "is like a convent bell,
Rung by red lightnings at the midnight hour,
While, crashing from the tempest-shaken tower,
Its moss-grown fragments mingle with the yell
Of winds that howl o'er graves." But if I swell
The fire-toned thunder's hymn, I have no power
To shake to-morrow's rain-drop from a flower,
No wish to bring the deluge I foretell.
Yet, while the bell of ages tolls in vain
O'er buried tyrants, may I not be heard
By tyrants living, sinning, hated, fear'd;
And, like the midnight cannon's friendly roar,
Flash'd through the portals of the wind and rain,
Warn haughty navies from a fatal shore?

CLOUDLESS STANAGE.

Why, shower-loved Derwent! have the rainbows left thee?
Mam-Tor! Win-Hill! a single falcon sails
Between ye; but no airy music wails.
Who, mountains! of your soft hues hath bereft ye,
And stol'n the dewy freshness of your dales?
Dove-stone! thy cold drip-drinking fountain fails;
Sun-darken'd shadows, motionless, are on ye;
Silence to his embrace of fire hath won ye;
And light, as with a shroud of glory, veils
The Peak and all his marvels. Slowly trails
One streak of silver o'er the deep dark blue
Its feathery stillness, while of whispered tales
The ash, where late his quivering shade he threw,
Dreams o'er the thoughtful plant that hoards its drop of dew.

NOON ON GREAT KINDER.

When last I look'd on thee, thy brow was black
With trouble, and beneath it flames flashed out;
While on thine awful face the heav'ns flung back
The red glare of thy lightnings, Kinderscout!
And all thy brethren answered with a shout
Their monarch's voice, that spake from sea to sea,
O'er all their cataracts. But now the trout
Sleeps in thy voiceless runlets. Now the bee
Alone is restless here: he sings to thee
An ode of praise, where, reddening like the rose,
Amid the hoof-marks of the thunder, glows
The cloud-fed berry; and the clouds, to me,
(While blusheth wide around the purple flower,)
Seem mute, in honour of thy noontide hour.
Mountains! ye awe and tire me. Fare ye well!
And let the tempests love ye. But, below,
The happy homed-and-hearth'd affections dwell.
Amid yon floral sea, where daisies blow
And children gather them, the village bell
Saith that the young are married; while the old
Talk of glad yesterdays, or fondly tell
Of buried loves. For joy is grief foretold!
And there young widows' hearts grow deadly cold,
And the poor orphan's smie is faint and brief,
When marriage chimes are heard o'er grange and wold.
Yet comfort there I seek, and joy in grief;
For man, by feelings strong as death controll'd,
Gives heart for heart, and knows that hearts are never sold.

TO THOMAS CROSSLEY.

"Poetry," critics say, "is dead or dying."
Is life then dead, or can religion die?
She whose broad pinions gather strength by flying
O'er new-made graves, or manless halls, where sighs
The wind of midnight to the clouded sky,
And hurrying stars! E'en as the skylark flies,
Poetry lives, and still will soar, while flows
A daughter's tear because her mother dies;
While on a child's grave grass or daisy grows;
Or o'er his coffin'd son a father bows
His locks of snow. Yes, Bard of Ovenden, (c)
Poetry lives! for, lo! with thee she goes
Where leaps the streamlet down the breezy glen;
With me, where God bids law-curs'd slaves be men!

A DREAM.

I dream'd that, tir'd with travel, I return'd
To Blacklow's (d) summit, and stood there with God
Alone, at midnight. Side by side we trod
The heath; and while around us rock'd and burn'd
The mountains, like a mountain'd sea of flame,
A gilded worm pronounc'd in scorn His name!
I, with my foot, the reptile would have spurn'd,
But could not. We stood still as death! That worm
Then spun slim films around th' Almighty's form,
Binding the hands that lift the seas, the feet
That will tread out the stars! and while, in mirth,
It spake this curse, I heard my own heart beat:
"With worse than barrenness I curse thee, Earth!
Henceforth, let every child be hopeless from his birth!"

But God said, "No! surely thou shalt not see
Every child hopeless, because thou art vile;
For thou art thy own victim, watch'd by me,
And I sheath vengeance in a dreadful smile.
But ere I bless thy curses for mankind,
And make them curses infinite to thee,
Thousands of thousands, foodless as the wind—
Yea, thousand, thousand, thousand men shall be
Care-hunted to the grave, by thine and thee.
And thou more crimes and criminals shalt make,
Than all earth's monsters heretofore have made:
Hell from beneath shall rise to bless thee, Snake!
And Death, to sum his profits by thy trade,
Count, through all ages past, their men and states betray'd."

CONISBOROUGH CASTLE.

In other days, time-darken'd Conisb'rough,
Men thought of Hengist when they spoke of thee!
My native river murmurs near thee now,
As then it murmur'd, hasting to the sea,
Through hazel bowers, where memory loves to be;
But in these days, thy pilgrims whisper low
The name of Scott, and join with his thy name.
Him, the Napoleon of Parnassus, thou
Hast seen with Shakspeare equal deem'd in fame;
Nor may the Cæsar of the Muses claim [past,
His throne unshar'd. Twice thirteen years are
Since hither, almost dead with care, I came,
What time another Cæsar fiercely cast [aghast.
O'er earth his stormy shade, which kings beheld

Through Russian wastes that Cæsar chased a cloud:
Calm was its aspect; for it had the power
To make his crowded host a lifeless crowd,
He being conquer'd in that fated hour,
Which gave his queen destruction for a dower.
Slow was its motion, and few accents loud
Broke from its chamber'd thunder as it fled;
But, when it stopp'd and spake, the conqueror bow'd,
Lower than vanquish'd kings, his laurel'd head.
They, waking from the vileness of their dread,
Gaz'd on the self-crown'd wretch, in mean surprise;
Then, with the vulgar dust, which he had spread
Around the consul's chair, bedimm'd his eyes,
And bade him die, as baffled baseness dies.

Yet better was it, that the Fool of Force
Triumph'd by force, and fell by force subdued,
Than that the ancient thrones of foot and horse
Had quelled, at once, the uproused multitude,
Whom giant wrongs with Titan might embued.
Well fought the people under Terror's wing;
And banded monarchs trembled, fled, and sued;
For Terror *reign'd*, Gaul's omnipresent king!
And *homed*, on tyrants' hearths the storm they brewed!
They serve us still, with strife! still, still renew'd;
The fight of fate accelerates their doom;
Themselves they mar, by battle, fraud, and feud;
And in large letters, of mixed flame and gloom,
Write, "The Republic! cometh, and will come."

Come the Republic then! Or come the will
Of one wise despot! Let the Nation rule,
Or be ruled well![e] But we will not be still
Of fifty thousand kingling-wolves the prey:
O Britain, sweep them from thy hearth away!
What! shall they reign alone, like the simoom,
Kings of the dead? Not so! we toil, and pay;
And ere we perish palled beneath their gloom—
Ere Mockery, throned o'er London's ashes, say,
"Behold a manless land! a nation's tomb!" [doom;
The heavens shall cry, Ha, ha! and shout their
Their names shall be a byword of dismay;
Chaff for the whirlwind shall their pomp become;
Their homes be graves, and dust for ruin they.
Come the Republic then! but not the strife
Of want-struck millions for immediate bread!
"The labour of the poor man is his life,"
And on our lives shall palaced fraud be fed? [said;
"They who rob him, strike me!" the Lord hath
"They break my everlasting covenant!" [spread;
And therefore worms beneath their pride are
For are not murderers numbered with the dead?
Fainting, their sons shall ask, their daughters pant,
For drink and bread, in vain; and both shall flee
Unblessed, go where they may, o'er land or sea,
And learn how hard to bear are scorn and want!
For I (the poor man's God) his strength will be,
And shake the dead leaves down, to save the tree! (f)

NOTES

TO RHYMED RAMBLES.

(a) About five years ago, a young lady came from London on a visit to a relative near Bolton Abbey, and with a presentiment that she would be drowned in the Strid of mournful memory. For some time she refused to see it; but, at last, overcome by the persuasion and ridicule of her friends, consented to do so. On approaching the water, which was forty-five feet deep, she threatened, with seeming levity, to leap in, exclaiming—"I am gone!" A piercing shriek followed. She had taken the fatal plunge! A gentleman, a few yards below, caught hold of her bonnet, but the strings broke—and she was drowned.

(b) The caged eagles of Wharncliffe have been removed to the Sheffield Botanical Gardens.

(c) Thomas Ovenden, author of "Flowers of Ebor."

(d) Blacklow Stone, near Glossop, the highest of the Derbyshire hills.

(e) "How happy might nations be, if they had not governments to hinder them!" says Colonel Thompson, in his letters of a representative. "All the good which is attributed to governments, society does for itself," says a prohibited author.

"They spat in the faces of their gigantic husbands," says Gibbon, speaking of the wives of certain Goths, who had surrendered a fortress to the eunuch Narses. But our matrons urge their husbands to submit to laws, which, interdicting our best affections, convert marriage into a crime and a curse, multiplied by the number of its births! If their daughters had one drop of true Gothic blood in their veins, the worst enemies of man (who, for the honour of human nature, it is hoped, have nothing human about them but the form) would soon, owl-like, hide themselves from the light of day in those woods which they still call their own.

(f) "If military men," says De Staël, "look with scorn on men of letters, it is because the latter seldom speak out. But when the art of composition becomes a weapon, eloquence is action; tyranny finds itself attacked by its most formidable foes, reason and indignation; and what is called 'protection,' being of the very essence of despotism, all tyrants have dreaded and hated the natural enemies of 'protection'—men who, thinking deeply, speak honestly, that is, fearlessly." Yet when we complain of the greatest wrong ever inflicted on the world by a faction, we are told that we must speak meekly of its authors—cauterize with milk and water—and by no means convert a sarcasm into an argument, as if it were possible to address to such persons a sarcasm which is not an argument! That it is not possible I will endeavour to demonstrate. Instead of the word "argument" then, read "gallows;" and I will defy them to shew that it ever was more properly applied as a punishment to any criminal, than it might be to about five hundred of their number, whom it would be easy to name, and, perhaps, in the highest degree prudent.

PEOPLE'S EDITION.

ANSTER FAIR,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

WILLIAM TENNANT.

WITH A

PREFATORY MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR AND HIS WRITINGS.

EDINBURGH:

PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS;
W. S. ORR AND COMPANY, LONDON; W. CURRY JUNIOR AND COMPANY,
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AND SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1838.

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PREFACE TO THE PRESENT EDITION—MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR AND HIS WRITINGS.

The author of *Anster Fair* is a native of Anstruther, the town which he has endeavoured to celebrate in his poem—a royal burgh on the south-eastern shore of the county of Fife, noted also as the birth-place of the most celebrated pulpit orator of our times, Dr Chalmers. These two alumni of the same parish school, possessing, as it appears, the same enthusiasm for mental achievement, shot out in very different directions, the one as a playful and romantic poet, the other as a serious and romantic preacher—each original in his peculiar department, and each endowed with a dash of powerful, yet at times puerile, though richly diversified invention. After receiving, from the town schools, all the instruction, vernacular and classical, which was there supplied, Mr Tennant, for further advancement, was sent in 1799 to the University of St Andrews, where he had the happiness of attending the prelections of Dr Hunter and Dr Hill, by both of whom his taste for classical learning was encouraged and confirmed. Circumstances prevented the prosecution of his studies at that university longer than two years. He left it in May 1801, and not long thereafter became clerk to his brother, then corn-factor, first at Glasgow (in 1803-4), and latterly at Anstruther (1805-6, &c.), in which distracted and precarious situation, he, by a studious disposition of time, found opportunities of cultivating the muses in secret, and of reading in their own languages the productions of the most celebrated poets of ancient and modern Europe. Homer, Virgil, Ariosto, Wieland, Camoëns, were all perused during the intervals of counting-house employment. Nor did he less gratify his literary curiosity in the severer and more dignified studies: history and archæology—Herodotus, Thucydides, and Livy—were studied with equal avidity. Above all descriptions of literature, he delighted in the books of the Hebrew writers, which, apart from all considerations of another kind of importance, he regarded, and still regards, as containing the finest and sublimest poetry to be found in the world. As a literary anecdote, and at the same time as an excitement to the juvenile student, it may be mentioned, that Mr Tennant's first reading of the Hebrew Bible was accomplished in half a year and three days, with no assistance but the grammar and dictionary. It may be instructive also to consider how this passion for Hebrew literature, cultivated at an early period of life and in secret, unencouraged and unpatronised, brought, thirty years thereafter, its own reward.

In the year 1811, being in his 27th year, and living in his father's house at Anstruther, much perplexed by commercial embarrassments into which he had been innocently drawn, he conceived and wrote his poem of *Anster Fair*, which, in the course of the ensuing year, was produced anonymously, in a small volume of plain appearance, by the bookseller of his native town.

Its provincial origin, limited sale, and perhaps, in some degree, the startling novelty of manner which characterised the poem, contributed to keep it in obscurity for more than a twelvemonth. The late Lord Woodhouselee, so distinguished as a polished scholar and critic, appears to have been the first member of the metropolitan learned world to become aware of the merits of the poem. In August 1812, he addressed the following letter to Mr Cockburn, the Anstruther publisher:—

"Sir—I have lately read, with a very high degree of pleasure, a small poetical performance, which I observe bears your name as publisher on the title-page. The author of *Anster Fair* cannot long remain concealed. It contains, in my opinion, unequivocal marks of strong original genius; a vein of humour of an uncommon cast, united with a talent for natural description of the most vivid and characteristic species, and, above all, a true feeling of the sublime—forming altogether one of the most pleasing and singular combinations of the different powers of poetry that I have ever met with. Unless the author has very strong reasons for concealing his name, I must own that I should be much gratified by being informed of it. Alex. Fraser Tytler."

The notice of a few other such critics soon brought the name of the author before the public; and in the latter part of 1814, the merits of the poem were blazoned to the world at large by a generous notice from the pen of Mr Jeffrey in the Edinburgh Review.

"We consider this volume," says the writer, "not only as eminently original, but as belonging to a class of composition hitherto but little known in the literature of this country—to that species, we mean, of gay or fantastic poetry which plays through the works of Pulci and Ariosto, and animates the compositions of many inferior writers both in Spain and in Italy—which is equally removed from the vulgarity of mere burlesque or mock-heroic, and from the sarcasm and point and finesse of satirical pleasantry—which is extravagant rather than ridiculous, and displays only the vague and unbounded licence of a sportive and raised imagination, without the cold pungency of wit, or the practised sagacity of derision. It frequently relaxes into childishness, and is sometimes concentrated to humour; but its leading character is a kind of enthusiastic gaiety—a certain intoxication and nimbleness of fancy, which pours out a profusion of images without much congruity or selection, and covers all the objects to which it is directed, with colours that are rather brilliant than harmonious, and combines them into groups that are more lively than graceful. This effervescence of the spirits has been hitherto supposed almost peculiar to the warmer regions of the south; and the poetry in which it naturally exhales itself, seems as if it could only find a suitable vehicle in their plastic and flexible idioms, or a fitting audience among the susceptible races by whom they were framed.

We are by no means certain that the present attempt will unsettle that opinion; and are very far from thinking, either that its success has been perfect, or that the author has been fortunate in the choice of a subject, or in all of the details of his execution. The attempt, however, is bold and vigorous; and indicates both talent and enterprise that may hereafter be more worthily employed. Hitherto, it is proper to mention, they have been exerted under circumstances the most unpropitious; for Mr Tennant is a kind of prodigy as well as Mr Hogg—and his book would be entitled to notice as a curiosity, even if its pretensions were much smaller than they are on the score of its literary merit." * *

"The subject, which we do not think very fortunately chosen, is borrowed from some ancient legends, respecting the marriage choice of a fair lady, whose beauty is still celebrated in the ballads and traditions of Mr Tennant's native district, and whose hand, it seems, was held out as the reward of the victor in an ass race, and a match of running in sacks—a competition of bagpiping, and of story-telling. Upon this homely foundation Mr Tennant has erected a vast superstructure of description, and expended a great treasure of poetry. He has also engrafted upon it the airy and ticklish machinery of Shakspeare's, or rather of Wieland's Oberon—though he has given the less adventurous name of Puck to his ministering spirit, who, with the female fairy to whom he is wedded, patronises the victor in these successive contentions, and secures not only his success, but his acceptance with the devoted fair." * *

"The great charm of this singular composition consists, no doubt, in the profusion of images and groups which it thrusts upon the fancy, and the crowd and hurry and animation with which they are all jostled and driven along; but this, though a very rare merit in any modern production, is entitled perhaps to less

distinction than the perpetual sallies and outbreakings of a rich and poetical imagination, by which the homely themes on which the author is professedly employed are constantly ennobled or contrasted, and in which the ardour of a mind evidently fitted for higher tasks is somewhat capriciously expended. It is this frequent kindling of the diviner spirit—this tendency to rise above the trivial subjects among which he has chosen to disport himself, and this power of connecting grand or beautiful conceptions with the representation of vulgar objects or ludicrous occurrences, that first recommended this poem to our notice, and still seem to us to entitle it to more general notoriety. The author is occupied, no doubt, in general, with low matters, and bent upon homely mirth, but his genius soars up every now and then in spite of him; and 'his delights'—to use a quaint expression of Shakspeare—

> 'his delights
> Are dolphin-like, and show their backs above
> The element they move in.'"

With reference to the allusion to Mr Hogg, whose *Queen's Wake* was the subject of the antecedent article, it may be mentioned, that the latter individual always protested against the propriety of putting Mr Tennant and him into one category, as authors who had cultivated poetry in lowly and difficult circumstances, seeing that the Anstruther poet was, even at this early period of his life, a man of extensive and varied learning, while he of Ettrick was a totally uneducated shepherd. There was some justice in this remark; but it must be allowed that the reviewer was quite right in applauding Mr Tennant for the zeal and success with which he had unassistedly prosecuted those studies which gave him the advantage pointed out by Mr Hogg. The *Anster Fair*, when fully known, experienced considerable popularity, and was several times printed. It is worthy of observation, that it proved the means of reviving a form of stanza—the *ottava rima*—which the English poets of the sixteenth century derived from the Italian, but which had since then fallen into complete disuse. Some years after, this stanza was also used by Lord Byron in his *Beppo*, without any acknowledgment of its having been suggested to him by the *Anster Fair*. He afterwards employed it in *Don Juan;* and it became a favourite mode with other poets, particularly Mr Hookham Frere, though without the two additional syllables to the concluding lines, which Mr Tennant had thought desirable for the sake of impressiveness.

Meanwhile, in the autumn of 1813, the author of *Anster Fair* was preferred to the situation of schoolmaster in the parish of Denino, an upland district at the eastern angle of Fife, between Anstruther and St Andrews. The office brought him an income of about forty pounds a-year, and was to be rejoiced in by the poet chiefly for its giving him rural quiet, and access to the library of the neighbouring university. He here continued his studies with all his former assiduity, and by means of books, without a master, acquainted himself with the Arabic, Syriac, and Persian languages. In respect of society, he would have been in a truly desolate condition, but for the friendship of a very accomplished country gentleman of his neighbourhood, Hugh Cleghorn, Esq. of Stravithie. He continued to officiate at Denino till 1816, when, chiefly through the kind intervention of Mr George Thomson, of Edinburgh, well known as the friend and correspondent of Burns, he was transferred to the more lucrative situation of parish schoolmaster at Lasswade, a village delightfully situated on the Esk, about six miles to the south of Edinburgh. The appointment was valuable, from its bringing Mr Tennant into contact with the literary men of the capital. He performed the duties of his laborious function at Lasswade till January 1819, when he was elected by the trustees of Dollar Institution to be the teacher of classical and oriental languages in that new and rising seminary. He there officiated till the beginning of 1835, when he attained a fit summit to the ambition of a modest scholar of his peculiar tastes, in being appointed by the crown to the vacant chair of Oriental Languages in St Mary's College at St Andrews. Since that time Mr Tennant has spent his winters at St Andrews, in the exercise of the duties of his professorship, though he still (1838) resides, during the summer months, at his beautifully situated villa of Devongrove, near Dollar.

Since the publication of *Anster Fair*, Mr Tennant has given to the world *The Thane of Fife*, a poem, *Cardinal Beaton*, a tragedy, and a spirited descriptive poem in the manner of Sir David Lyndsay, under the title of *The Dinging Down of the Cathedral*—meaning the metropolitan church of Scotland at St Andrews, which was destroyed by the followers of Knox in one day.

It should perhaps have been mentioned, at an earlier part of this brief memoir, that Mr Tennant, though born without any personal malformation, lost, at an early period of his childhood, the use of his feet, so that all his motions through life have been performed on crutches. We have heard him state, that this, instead of diminishing his enjoyment of life, has rather added to it, and instead of retarding, has rather promoted his advance in the world, having not only tended to concentrate his mind upon his studies, but also to procure for him a sympathising friendship in many quarters where he had no other claim. We are to recollect, however, that lameness was, in his case, connected with none of that proud impatience which made it a source of unmingled misery to Byron, but with a temper of the serenest and blandest elements, which no friend, to our knowledge, has ever seen ruffled.

The present edition of *Anster Fair* comes before the world by virtue of an arrangement between Mr Tennant and the publishers, who were anxious that their series of cheap Standard Works, and more particularly their series of the Scottish Poets, should be graced by a work combining the humour of James the First and Dunbar, with that of Ariosto and Tassoni, and which, they are persuaded, nothing but *price* could have so long kept out of the hands of the humblest as well as the highest of the people. In addition to the main poem, they have been enabled to present a selection of Mr Tennant's shorter pieces, chiefly in the department of the familiar and the humorous.

ORIGINAL (AUTHOR'S) PREFACE.

The following poem is presented to the public with that diffidence and anxiety which every young author feels when the good or bad fate of his first production must check his rashness and vanity, or enliven his future efforts with the confidence arising from popular approbation.

The poem is written in stanzas of octave rhyme, or the *ottava rima* of the Italians, a measure said to be invented by Boccaccio, and after him employed by Tasso and Ariosto. From these writers it was transferred into English poetry by Fairfax, in his translation of "Jerusalem Delivered," but since his days, has been by our poets, perhaps, too little cultivated. The stanza of Fairfax is here shut with the Alexandrine of Spenser, that its close may be more full and sounding.

In a humorous poem, partly descriptive of Scottish manners, it was impossible to avoid using Scottish words. These, however, will, it is hoped, be found not too many. Some old English words are likewise admitted.

The transactions of Anster Fair may be supposed to have taken place during the reign of James V.—a monarch whom tradition reports to have had many gamesome rambles in Fife, and with whose liveliness and jollity of temper the merriment of the Fair did not ill accord. Yet a scrupulous congruity with the modes of his times was not intended, and must not be expected. Ancient and modern manners are mixed and jumbled together, to heighten the humour, or variegate the description.

Edinburgh, 23d June 1814.

ANSTER FAIR.

CANTO I.

I.

While some of Troy and pettish heroes sing,
And some of Rome and chiefs of pious fame,
And some of men that thought it harmless thing
To smite off heads in Mars's bloody game,
And some of Eden's garden gay with spring,
And Hell's dominions terrible to name—
I sing a theme far livelier, happier, gladder,
I sing of Anster Fair, and bonny Maggie Lauder.

II.

What time from east, from west, from south, from north,
From every hamlet, town, and smoky city,
Laird, clown, and beau, to Anster Fair came forth,
The young, the gay, the handsome, and the witty,
To try in various sport and game their worth,
Whilst prize before them Maggie sat, the pretty,
And after many a feat, and joke, and banter,
Fair Maggie's hand was won by mighty Rob the Ranter.

III.

Muse, that from top of thine old Greekish hill,
Didst the harp-fing'ring Theban younker view,
And on his lips bid bees their sweets distil,
And gav'st the chariot that the white swans drew,
Oh let me scoop, from thine ethereal rill,
Some little palmfuls of the blessed dew,
And lend the swan-drawn car, that safely I,
Like him, may scorn the earth, and burst into the sky.

IV.

Our themes are like; for he the games extoll'd
Held in the chariot-shaken Grecian plains,
Where the vain victor, arrogant and bold,
A pickle parsley got for all his pains;
I sing of sports more worthy to be told,
Where better prize the Scottish victor gains:
What were the crowns of Greece but wind and bladder,
Compared with marriage-bed of bonny Maggie Lauder?

V.

And oh that King Apollo would but grant
A little spark of that transcendant flame,
That fir'd the Chian rhapsodist to chant
How vied the bowmen for Ulysses' dame,
And him of Rome to sing how Atalant
Plied, dart in hand, the suitor-slaught'ring game,
Till the bright gold, bowl'd forth along the grass,
Betray'd her to a spouse, and stopp'd the bounding lass!

VI.

But lo! from bosom of yon southern cloud,
I see the chariot come which Pindar bore;
I see the swans, whose white necks, arching proud,
Glitter with golden yoke, approach my shore:
For me they come; Oh Phœbus, potent god!
Spare, spare me now—enough, good king—no more—
A little spark I ask'd in moderation,
Why scorch me ev'n to death with fiery inspiration?

VII.

My pulse beats fire—my pericranium glows,
Like baker's oven, with poetic heat;
A thousand bright ideas, spurning prose,
Are in a twinkling hatch'd in Fancy's seat;
Zounds! they will fly out at my ears and nose,
If through my mouth they find not passage fleet;
I hear them buzzing deep within my noddle,
Like bees that in their hives confus'dly hum and huddle.

VIII.

How now?—what's this?—my very eyes, I trow,
Drop on my hands their base prosaic scales;
My visual orbs are purg'd from film, and lo!
Instead of Anster's turnip-bearing vales,
I see old Fairyland's mirac'lous show,
Her trees of tinsel kiss'd by freakish gales,
Her ouphes, that cloak'd in leaf-gold skim the breeze,
And fairies swarming thick as mites in rotten cheese.

IX.

I see the puny fair-chinn'd goblin rise
Suddenly glorious from his mustard pot;
I see him wave his hand in seemly wise,
And button round him tight his fulgent coat;
While Maggie Lauder, in a great surprise,
Sits startled on her chair, yet fearing not;
I see him ope his dewy lips; I hear
The strange and strict command address'd to Maggie's ear.

X.

I see the Ranter with bagpipe on back,
As to the Fair he rides jocundly on;
I see the crowds that press with speed not slack
Along each road that leads to Anster Loan;
I see the suitors, that, deep-sheath'd in sack,
Hobble and tumble, bawl and swear, and groan;
I see—but fie, thou brainish Muse! what mean
These vapourings, and brags of what by thee is seen?

XI.

Go to—be cooler, and in order tell
To all my good co-townsmen list'ning round,
How every merry incident befell,
Whereby our Loan shall ever be renown'd;
Say first, what elf or fairy could impel
Fair Mag, with wit, and wealth, and beauty crown'd,
To put her suitors to such waggish test,
And give her happy bed to him that jumped best.

XII.

'Twas on a keen December night, John Frost
Drove thro' mid air his chariot, icy-wheel'd,
And from the sky's crisp ceiling star-embost,
Whiff'd off the clouds that the pure blue conceal'd;
The hornless moon amid her brilliant host
Shone, and with silver-sheeted lake and field;
'Twas cutting cold; I'm sure, each trav'ller's nose
Was pinch'd right red that night, and numb'd were all his toes.

XIII.

Not so were Maggie Lauder's toes, as she
In her warm chamber at her supper sate
(For 'twas that hour when burgesses agree
To eat their suppers ere the night grows late).
Alone she sat, and pensive as may be
A young fair lady, wishful of a mate;
Yet with her teeth held now and then a-picking,
Her stomach to refresh, the breast-bone of a chicken.

XIV.

She thought upon her suitors, that with love
Besiege her chamber all the livelong day,
Aspiring each her virgin heart to move
With courtship's every troublesome essay—
Calling her angel, sweeting, fondling, dove,
And other nicknames in love's friv'lous way;
While she, though their addresses still she heard,
Held back from all her heart, and still no beau preferr'd.

XV.

"What, what!" quo' MAG, "must thus it be my doom
To spend my prime in maidhood's joyless state,
And waste away my sprightly body's bloom
In spouseless solitude without a mate—
Still toying with my suitors, as they come
Cringing in lowly courtship to my gate?
Fool that I am, to live unwed so long!
More fool, since I am woo'd by such a clam'rous throng!

XVI.

For was e'er heiress with much gold in chest,
And dowr'd with acres of wheat-bearing land,
By such a pack of men, in am'rous quest,
Fawningly spaniel'd to bestow her hand?
Where'er I walk, the air that feeds my breast
Is by the gusty sighs of lovers fann'd;
Each wind that blows wafts love-cards to my lap;
Whilst I—ah stupid MAG!—avoid each am'rous trap!

XVII.

Then come, let me my suitors' merits weigh,
And in the worthiest lad my spouse select:—
First, there's our ANSTER merchant, Norman Ray,
A powder'd wight with golden buttons deck'd,
That stinks with scent, and chats like popinjay,
And struts with phiz tremendously erect:
Four brigs has he that on the broad sea swim;—
He is a pompous fool—I cannot think of him.

XVIII.

Next is the maltster Andrew Strang, that takes
His seat i'the bailie's loft on Sabbath-day,
With paltry visage white as oaten cakes,
As if no blood runs gurgling in his clay;
Heav'ns! what an awkward hunch the fellow makes,
As to the priest he does the bow repay!
Yet he is rich—a very wealthy man, true—
But, by the holy rood, I will have none of Andrew.

XIX.

Then for the lairds—there's Melvil of Carnbee,
A handsome gallant, and a beau of spirit;
Who can go down the dance so well as he?
And who can fiddle with such manly merit?
Ay, but he is too much the debauchee—
His cheeks seem sponges oozing port and claret;
In marrying him I should bestow myself ill—
And so, I'll not have you, thou fuddler, Harry Melvil!

XX.

There's Cunningham of Barns, that still assails
With verse and billet-doux my gentle heart—
A bookish squire, and good at telling tales,
That rhymes and whines of Cupid, flame, and dart;
But, oh! his mouth a sorry smell exhales,
And on his nose sprouts horribly the wart;
What though there be a fund of lore and fun in him?
He has a rotten breath—I cannot think of Cunningham!

XXI.

Why then, there's Allardyce, that plies his suit
And battery of courtship more and more;
Spruce Lochmalonie, that with booted foot
Each morning wears the threshold of my door;
Auchmoutie too and Bruce, that persecute
My tender heart with am'rous buffets sore:—
Whom to my hand and bed should I promote?—
Eh-lah! what sight is this?—what ails my mustard-pot?"

XXII.

Here broke the lady her soliloquy;
For in a twink her pot of mustard, lo!
Self-moved, like Jove's wheel'd stool that rolls on high,
'Gan caper on her table to and fro,
And hopp'd and fidgeted before her eye,
Spontaneous, here and there, a wondrous show:
As leaps, instinct with mercury, a bladder,
So leaps the mustard-pot of bonny MAGGIE LAUDER.

XXIII.

Soon stopp'd its dance th' ignoble utensil,
When from its round and small recess there came
Thin curling wreaths of paly smoke, that still,
Fed by some magic unapparent flame,
Mount to the chamber's stucco'd roof, and fill
Each nook with fragrance, and refresh the dame:
Ne'er smelt a Phœnix-nest so sweet, I wot,
As smelt the luscious fumes of MAGGIE'S mustard-pot.

XXIV.

It reeked censer-like; then, strange to tell!
Forth from the smoke, that thick and thicker grows,
A fairy of the height of half an ell,
In dwarfish pomp, majestically rose:
His feet, upon the table 'stablish'd well,
Stood trim and splendid in their snake-skin hose;
Gleam'd topaz-like the breeches he had on,
Whose waistband like the bend of summer rainbow shone.

XXV.

His coat seem'd fashion'd of the threads of gold,
That intertwine the clouds at sun-set hour,
And, certes, Iris with her shuttle bold
Wove the rich garment in her lofty bower;
To form its buttons were the Pleiads old
Pluck'd from their sockets, sure by genie-power,
And sew'd upon the coat's resplendant hem;
Its neck was lovely green, each cuff a sapphire gem.

XXVI.

As when the churlish spirit of the Cape
To Gama, voyaging to Mozambique,
Up-popp'd from sea, a tangle-tassel'd* shape,
With mussels sticking inch-thick on his cheek,
And 'gan with tortoise-shell his limbs to scrape,
And yawn'd his monstrous blobberlips to speak;
Brave Gama's hairs stood bristled at the sight,
And on the tarry deck sunk down his men with fright.

XXVII.

So sudden (not so huge and grimly dire)
Uprose to MAGGIE'S stounded eyne the sprite,
As fair a fairy as you could desire,
With ruddy cheek, and chin and temples white;
His eyes seem'd little points of sparkling fire,
That, as he look'd, charm'd with inviting light;
He was, indeed, as bonny a fay and brisk,
As e'er on long moon-beam was seen to ride and frisk.

XXVIII.

Around his bosom, by a silken zone,
A little bagpipe gracefully was bound,
Whose pipes like hollow stalks of silver shone,
The glist'ring tiny avenues of sound;
Beneath his arm the windy bag, full blown,
Heav'd up its purple like an orange round,
And only waited orders to discharge
Its blasts with charming groan into the sky at large.

XXIX.

He wav'd his hand to MAGGIE, as she sat
Amaz'd and startl'd on her carved chair;
Then took his petty feather-garnish'd hat
In honour to the lady, from his hair,
And made a bow so dignifiedly flat,
That MAG was witched with his beauish air:
At last he spoke, with voice so soft, so kind,
So sweet, as if his throat with fiddle-strings was lin'd.

XXX.

"Lady! be not offended that I dare,
Thus forward and impertinently rude,
Emerge, uncall'd, into the upper air,
Intruding on a maiden's solitude;
Nay, do not be alarm'd, thou lady fair!
Why startle so?—I am a fairy good;
Not one of those that, envying beauteous maids,
Speckle their skins with moles, and fill with spleens their heads.

XXXI.

For, as conceal'd in this clay-house of mine,
I overheard thee in a lowly voice,
Weighing thy lovers' merits, with design
Now on the worthiest lad to fix thy choice,

* *Tangle-tassel'd*, hung round with tangle (sea-weed) as with tassels. I observe tangle in Bailey's Dictionary, though not in Johnson's.

I have up-bolted from my paltry shrine,
To give thee, sweet-eye'd lass, my best advice;
For, by the life of Oberon my king!
To pick good husband out is, sure, a ticklish thing.

XXXII.

And never shall good Tommy Puck permit
Such an assemblage of unwonted charms
To cool some lecher's lewd licentious fit,
And sleep imbounded by his boisterous arms:
What though his fields by twenty ploughs be split,
And golden wheat wave riches on his farms?
His house is shame—it cannot, shall not be;
A greater, happier doom, O Mag, awaiteth thee.

XXXIII.

Strange are indeed the steps by which thou must
Thy glory's happy eminence attain;
But fate hath fix'd them, and 'tis fate's t'adjust
The mighty links that ends to means enchain;
Nor may poor Puck his little fingers thrust
Into the links to break Jove's steel in twain;
Then, Maggie, hear, and let my words descend
Into thy soul, for much it boots thee to attend.

XXXIV.

To morrow, when o'er th' Isle of May the sun
Lifts up his forehead bright with golden crown,
Call to thine house the light-heel'd men, that run
Afar on messages for Anster Town,
Fellows of sp'rit, by none in speed out-done,
Of lofty voice, enough a drum to drown,
And bid them hie, post-haste, through all the nation,
And publish, far and near, this famous proclamation:

XXXV.

Let them proclaim, with voice's loudest tone,
That on your next approaching market-day,
Shall merry sports be held in Anster Loan,
With celebration notable and gay;
And that a prize, than gold or costly stone
More precious, shall the victor's toils repay,
Ev'n thy own form with beauties so replete—
Nay, Maggie, start not thus!—thy marriage-bed, my sweet.

XXXVI.

First, on the Loan shall ride full many an ass,
With stout whip-wielding rider on his back,
Intent with twinkling hoof to pelt the grass,
And pricking up his long ears at the crack;
Next o'er the ground the daring men shall pass,
Half-coffin'd in their cumbrances of sack,
With heads just peeping from their shrines of bag,
Horribly hobbling round, and straining hard for Mag.

XXXVII.

Then shall the pipers groaningly begin
In squeaking rivalry their merry strain,
Till Billyness shall echo back the din,
And Innergelly woods shall ring again;
Last, let each man that hopes thy hand to win
By witty product of prolific brain,
Approach, and, confident of Pallas' aid,
Claim by an hum'rous tale possession of thy bed.

XXXVIII.

Such are the wondrous tests by which, my love!
The merits of thy husband must be tried,
And he that shall in these superior prove
(One proper husband shall the Fates provide),
Shall from the Loan with thee triumphant move
Homeward, the jolly bridegroom and the bride,
And at thy house shall eat the marriage-feast,
When I'll pop up again." Here Tommy Puck surceast.

XXXIX.

He ceas'd, and to his wee mouth, dewy-wet,
His bagpipe's tube of silver up he held,
And underneath his down-press'd arm he set
His purple bag, that with a tempest swell'd;
He play'd and pip'd so sweet, that never yet
Mag had a piper heard that Puck excell'd;
Had Midas heard a tune so exquisite,
By Heav'n! his long base ears had quiver'd with delight.

XL.

Tingle the fire-ir'as, poker, tongs, and grate,
Responsive to the blythesome melody!
The tables and the chairs inanimate
Wish they had muscles now to trip it high!
Wave back and forwards at a wondrous rate,
The window-curtains, touch'd with sympathy!
Fork, knife, and trencher, almost break their sloth,
And caper on their ends upon the table-cloth!

XLI.

How then could Maggie, sprightly, smart, and young,
Withstand that bagpipe's blythe awak'ning air?
She, as her ear-drum caught the sounds, up-sprung
Like lightning, and despis'd her idle chair,
And into all the dance's graces flung
The bounding members of her body fair;
From nook to nook through all her room she tript,
And whirl'd like whirligig, and reel'd, and bobb'd, and skipt.

XLII.

At last the little piper ceas'd to play,
And deftly bow'd, and said, "My dear, good night;"
Then in a smoke evanish'd clean away,
With all his gaudy apparatus bright;
As breaks soap-bubble, which a boy in play
Blows from his short tobacco-pipe aright,
So broke poor Puck from view, and on the spot
Y-smoking aloes-reek he left his mustard-pot.

XLIII.

Whereat the furious lady's wriggling feet
Forgot to patter in such pelting wise,
And down she gladly sunk upon her seat,
Fatigu'd and panting from her exercise;
She sat, and mus'd a while, as it was meet,
On what so late had occupied her eyes;
Then to her bed-room went, and doff'd her gown,
And laid upon her couch her charming person down.

XLIV.

Some say that Maggie slept so sound that night,
As never she had slept since she was born;
But sure am I, that, thoughtful of the sprite,
She twenty times upon her bed did turn;
For still appear'd to stand before her sight
The gaudy goblin, glorious from his urn,
And still within the cavern of her ear,
Th' injunction echoing rung, so strict and strange to hear.

XLV.

But when the silver-harness'd steeds, that draw
The car of morning up th' empyreal height,
Had snorted day upon North-Berwick Law,
And from their glist'ring loose manes toss'd the light,
Immediately from bed she rose (such awe
Of Tommy press'd her soul with anxious weight),
And donn'd her tissued fragrant morning vest,
And to fulfil his charge her earliest care addrest.

XLVI.

Straight to her house she tarried not to call
Her messengers and heralds swift of foot,
Men skill'd to hop o'er dykes and ditches; all
Gifted with sturdy brazen lungs to boot;
She bade them halt at every town, and bawl
Her proclamation out with mighty bruit,
Inviting loud, to Anster Loan and Fair,
The Scottish beau to jump for her sweet person there

XLVII.

They took each man his staff into his hand;
They button'd round their bellies close their coats;
They flew divided through the frozen land;
Were never seen such swiftly-trav'lling Scots!
Nor ford, slough, mountain, could their speed withstand;
Such fleetness have the men that feed on oats!
They skirr'd, they flounder'd thro' the sleets and snows,
And puff'd against the winds, that bit in spite each nose

XLVIII.

They halted at each wall-fenc'd town renown'd,
And ev'ry lesser borough of the nation;
And with the trumpet's welkin-rifting sound,
And tuck of drum of loud reverberation,

Tow'rds the four wings of heav'n, they, round and round,
Proclaim'd in Stentor-like vociferation,
That, on th' approaching day of ANSTER market,
Should merry sports be held:—Hush! listen now and hark it!—

XLIX.

"Ho! beaux and pipers, wits and jumpers, ho!
Ye buxom blades that like to kiss the lasses;
Ye that are skill'd sew'd up in sacks to go;
Ye that excel in *horsemanship* of asses;
Ye that are smart at telling tales, and know
On Rhyme's two stilts to crutch it up Parnassus;
Ho! lads, your sacks, pipes, asses, tales, prepare
To jump, play, ride, and rhyme, at ANSTER Loan and FAIR!

L.

First, on the green turf shall each ass draw nigh,
Caparison'd or clouted for the race,
With mounted rider, sedulous to ply
Cudgel or whip, and win the foremost place;
Next shall th' advent'rous men, that dare to try
Their bodies' springiness in hempen case,
Put on their bags, and, with ridic'lous bound,
And sweat and huge turmoil, pass lab'ring o'er the ground.

LI.

Then shall the pipers, gentlemen o' the drone,
Their pipes in gleesome competition screw,
And grace, with loud solemnity of groan,
Each his invented tune to th' audience new;
Last shall each witty bard, to whom is known
The craft of Helicon's rhyme-jingling crew,
His story tell in good poetic strains,
And make his learned tongue the midwife to his brains.

LII.

And he whose tongue the wittiest tale shall tell,
Whose bagpipe shall the sweetest tune resound,
Whose heels, tho' clogg'd with sack, shall jump it well,
Whose ass shall foot with fleetest hoof the ground,
He who from all the rest shall bear the bell,
With victory in every trial crown'd,
He (mark it, lads!) to MAGGIE LAUDER'S house
That self same night shall go, and take her for his spouse."

LIII.

Here ceas'd the criers of the sturdy lungs;
But here the gossip Fame (whose body's pores
Are naught but open ears and babbling tongues,
That gape and wriggle on her hide in scores)
Began to jabber o'er each city's throngs,
Blaz'ning the news through all the Scottish shores;
Nor had she blabb'd, methinks, so stoutly, since
Queen Dido's peace was broke by Troy's love-truant Prince.

LIV.

In every Lowland vale and Highland glen,
She nois'd th' approaching fun of ANSTER FAIR;
Ev'n when in sleep were laid the sons of men,
Snoring away on good chaff-beds their care,
You might have heard her faintly murm'ring then,
For lack of audience, to the midnight air,
That from Fife's East Nook up to farthest Stornoway,
Fair MAGGIE'S loud report most rapidly was borne away.

LV.

And soon the mortals, that design to strive
By meritorious jumping for the prize,
Train up their bodies, ere the day arrive,
To th' lumpish sack-encumber'd exercise;
You might have seen no less than four or five
Hobbling in each town-loan in awkward guise;
E'en little boys, when from the school let out,
Mimick'd the bigger beaux, and leap'd in pokes about.

LVI.

Through cots and granges with industrious foot,
By laird and knight were light-heel'd asses sought,
So that no ass of any great repute,
For twenty Scots marks could have then been bought;
Nor e'er, before or since, the long-ear'd brute
Was such a goodly acquisition thought.
The pipers vex'd their ears and pipes t'invent
Some tune that might the taste of ANSTER MAG content.

LVII.

Each poet, too, whose lore-manured brain
Is hot of soil, and sprouts up mushroom wit,
Ponder'd his noddle into extreme pain
T' excogitate some story nice and fit:
When rack'd had been his skull some hours in vain,
He, to relax his mind a little bit,
Plung'd deep into a sack his precious body,
And school'd it for the race, and hopp'd around his study.

LVIII.

Such was the sore preparatory care
Of all th' ambitious that for April sigh:
Nor sigh the young alone for ANSTER FAIR;
Old men and wives, erewhile content to die,
Who hardly can forsake their easy-chair,
To take, abroad, farewell of sun and sky,
With new desire of life now glowing, pray,
That they may just o'erlive our famous market-day.

CANTO II.

I.

LAST night I dream'd that to my dark bedside
Came, white with rays, the poet of the "Quhair,"*
And drew my curtain silently aside,
And stood and smil'd, majestically fair;
He to my finger then a ring applied
(It glitter'd like Aurora's yellow hair),
And gave his royal head a pleasant wag,
And said, "Go on, my boy, and celebrate thy MAG!"

II.

The sun, upcharioting from Capricorn,
Had 'tween the Ram's horns thrust his gilded nose;
And now his bright fist drops, each April morn,
O'er hill and dale, the daisy and the rose;
Wantons the lewd Earth with the god unshorn,
And from her womb the infant verdure throws,
Whilst he, good paramour! leaves Tithys' valley
Each morn by five o'clock, with her to sport and dally.

III.

Old Kelly-law, the kindly nurse of sheep,
Puts on her daisy-tissued gown of green;
On all her slopes so verdurous and steep,
The bleating children of the flock are seen;
While with a heart where mirth and pleasure keep
Their dwelling, and with honest brow serene,
The shepherd eyes his flock in mood of glee,
And wakes with oaten pipe the echoes of Carnbee.

IV.

And see how Airdrie woods upshoot on high
Their leafy living glories to the day,
As if they long'd t' embrace the vaulty sky
With their long branchy arms so green and gay!
Balcarras-craig, so rough, and hard, and dry,
Enliven'd into beauty by the ray,
Heaves up, bedeck'd with flow'rs, his ruffian-side,
Like giant hung with gawds, and boasts his tricksy pride.

V.

Ev'n on the King's-muir jigs the jolly Spring,
Scattering from whin to whin the new perfume;
While, near the sea-coast, Flora tarrying,
Touches the garden's parterres into bloom;
With joy the villages and cities ring;
Cowherd and cow rejoice, and horse and groom;
The ploughman laughs amid his joyous care;
And ANSTER burghers laugh in prospect of their Fair.

VI.

For lo! now peeping just above the vast
Vault of the German Sea, in east afar,
Appears full many a brig's and schooner's mast,
Their topsails strutting with the vernal harr;†
Near and more near they come, and show at last
Their ocean-thumping hulks all black with tar;
Their stems are pointed toward ANSTER pier,
While, flying o'er their sterns, the well-known flags appear.

* [James I. of Scotland.]

† The *harr* is the name given by the fishermen to that gentle breeze which generally blows from the east in a fine spring or summer afternoon.

VII.

From clear-skied France and muddy Zuyder-Zee,
They come, replenish'd with the stores of trade;
Some from the Hollander of lumpish knee
Convey his lintseed, stow'd in bag or cade;
Heav'n bless him! may his brecches countless be;
And warm and thick, and ever undecay'd!
For he it was that first supply'd the Scots
With linen for their sarks, and stout frieze for their coats.

VIII.

Some bring, in many an anker hooped strong,
From Flushing's port, the palate-biting gin,
Th' inspirer of the tavern's noisy song,
The top-delight, the nectar of each inn,
That sends a-bounding through the veins along
The loit'ring blood when frosty days begin,
The bev'rage wherein fiddlers like to nuzzle,
The gauger's joy to *seize*, and old wife's joy to guzzle!

IX.

Some from Garonne and bonny banks of Seine,
Transport in pipes the blood of Bacchus' berry,
Wherewith our lairds may fume the fuddl'd brain,
And grow, by bousing, boisterously merry;
And whereby, too, their cheeks a glow may gain,
Abashing ev'n the red of July's cherry;
Oh, it is right—our lairds do well, I ween;
A bottle of black wine is worth all Hippocrene!

X.

Soon, hurried forward by the skittish gales,
In Anster harbour every vessel moors;
Furl'd by the seamen are the flapping sails;
Fix'd are the halsers to the folk-clad shores;
Their holds discharge the wealth of Gallia's vales,
And Amsterdam's and Flushing's useful stores,
All to augment, with commerce' various ware,
The bustle and the trade of famous Anster Fair.

XI.

Nor distant now the day; the cream-fac'd sun,*
That, rising, shall engild to-morrow's air,
Shall shine with courteous beams upon the fun
And frolic of the celebrated Fair;
And now, already, have the folk begun
(So eager are they the delight to share),
In flocks to Maggie's borough to resort,
That they may all, betimes, be present at the sport.

XII.

Each hedge-lin'd highway of the king, that leads
Or straightly or obliquely to the Loan,
Seems, as the Muse looks downwards, pav'd with heads,
And hats and cowls of those that bustle on;
From Johnny Groat's House to the border-meads,
From isle of Arran to the mouth of Don,
In thousands puffingly to Fife they run,
Gold in their pockets lodg'd, and in their noddles fun.

XIII.

Say, Muse, who first, who last, on foot or steed,
Came candidates for Maggie to her town?
St Andrew's sprightly students first proceed,
Clad in their foppery of sleeveless gown;
Forth whistling from Salvador's gate they speed,
Full many a mettlesome and fiery loun,
Forgetting Horace for a while and Tully,
And mad t'embag their limbs and leap it beautifully.

XIV.

For ev'n in Learning's cobweb'd halls had rung
The loud report of Maggie Lauder's fame,
And Pedantry's Greek-conning sapient tongue
In songs had wagg'd in honour of her name;
Up from their mouldy books and tasks had sprung
Bigent and Magistrand to try the game;
Prelections ceas'd—old Alma Mater slept;
And o'er his silent rooms the ghost of Wardlaw wept.

XV.

So down in troops the red-clad students come
As kittens blythe, a joke-exchanging crew,
And in their heads bear learned Greece and Rome,
And haply Cyprus in their bodies too;
Some on their journey pipe and play; and some
Talk long of Mag, how fair she was to view,
And as they talk (ay me! so much the sadder!)
Backwards they scale the steps of honest Plato's ladder.*

XVI.

Others, their heels of weariness to cheat,
Repeated tales of classic merriment,
How the fool Faunus, on his noiseless feet,
At midnight to the cave of Tmolus went,
Scorch'd as he was with Venus' fiercest heat,
On cuckold-making mischievous intent,
Till from the horny fist of hairy Hercules,
He got upon the cheek a most confounded jerk, alas!

XVII.

Nor come they only down; in chaise or gig
Th' endoctrin'd sage professors lolling ride,
Their heads with curl'd vastidity of wig
Thatch'd round and round, and queerly beautified;
In silken hose is sheath'd each learned leg;
White are their cravats, long and trimly tied.
Some say they came to jump for Maggie too,
But college-records say they came the sport to view.

XVIII.

See, as their coach-wheels scour the Eastburn-lane,
Rattling as if the pavement up to tear,
How men and women, huddling in their train,
And hallooing shouts of loud applause appear!
Red-cheek'd and white-cheek'd, stout and feeble men,
With staff or staff-less, draw to Anster near;
And such a mob come trampling o'er King's-muir,
They raise a cloud of dust that does the sun obscure.

XIX.

Next from Deninos, every house and hut,
Her simple guileless people hie away;
That day the doors of parish-school were shut,
And every scholar got his leave to play:
Down rush they light of heart and light of foot,
Big ploughmen, in their coats of hodden grey,
Weavers despising now both web and treadle,
Collier and collier's wife, and minister and beadle.

XX.

Next, from the well-air'd ancient town of Crail,
Go out her craftsmen with tumultuous din,
Her wind-bleach'd fishers, sturdy-limb'd and hale,
Her in-knee'd tailors, garrulous and thin;
And some are flush'd with horns of pithy ale,
And some are fierce with drams of smuggl'd gin,
While, to augment his drowth, each to his jaws
A good Crail capon† holds, at which he rugs and gnaws.

XXI.

And from Kingsbarns and hamlet‡ clep'd of boars,
And farms around (their names too long to add),
Sally the villagers and hinds in scores,
Tenant and laird, and hedger, hodden-clad:
Bolted are all the East-nook houses' doors;
Ev'n toothless wives pass westward, strangely glad,
Propping their trem'lous limbs on oaken stay,
And in their red plaids drest as if 'twere Sabbath day

XXII.

And bare-foot lasses, on whose ruddy face
Unfurl'd is health's rejoicing banner seen,
Trick'd in their Sunday mutches edg'd with lace,
Tippets of white, and frocks of red and green,
Come tripping o'er the roads with jocund pace,
Gay as May-morning, tidy, gim, and clean,
Whilst, joggling at each wench's side, her joe
Cracks many a rustic joke, his pow'r of wit to show.

XXIII.

Then jostling forward on the western road,
Approach the folk of wind-swept Pittenweem,
So num'rous that the highways, long and broad,
One waving field of gowns and coat-tails seem;
The fat man puffing goes oppress'd with load
Of cumb'rous flesh and corpulence extreme;
The lean man bounds along, and with his toes
Smites on the fat man's heels, that slow before him goes.

* Anster Lintseed Market (as it is called) is on the 11th of April, or on one of the six days immediately succeeding.

* The student wishing to understand this ladder, may consult Plato. Conviv. tom. iii. page 211, of Serrani's edition.

† A *Crail capon* is a dried haddock.

‡ Boarhills.

XXIV.

St Monance, Elie, and adjacent farms,
Turn their mechanics, fishers, farmers out;
Sun-burnt and shoeless schoolboys rush in swarms,
With childish trick, and revelry and shout;
Mothers bear little children in their arms,
Attended by their giggling daughters stout;
Clowns, cobblers, cotters, tanners, weavers, beaux,
Hurry and hop along in clusters and in rows.

XXV.

And every husbandman, round Largo law,
Hath scrap'd his huge-wheel'd dung-cart fair and clean,
Wherein on sacks stuff'd full of oaten straw,
Sit the goodwife, Tam, Katey, Jock, and Jean;
In flow'rs and ribbons drest the horses draw
Stoutly their creaking cumbersome machine,
As on his cart-head sits the goodman proud,
And cheerily cracks his whip and whistles clear and loud.

XXVI.

Then from her coal-pits Dysart vomits forth
Her subterranean men of colour dun,
Poor human mouldwarps! doom'd to scrape in earth—
Cimmerian people, strangers to the sun;
Gloomy as soot, with faces grim and swarth,
They march, most sourly leering every one,
Yet very keen, at Anster Loan, to share
The merriments and sports to be accomplish'd there.

XXVII.

Nor did Path-head detain her wrangling race
Of weavers, toiling at their looms for bread;
For now their slippery shuttles rest a space
From flying through their labyrinths of thread;
Their treadle-shaking feet now scour apace
Through Gallowtown with levity of tread;
So on they pass, with sack in hand, full bent
To try their sinews' strength in dire experiment.

XXVIII.

And long Kirkaldy, from each dirty street
Her num'rous population eastward throws;
Her roguish boys with bare unstocking'd feet,
Her rich ship-owners, gen'rous and jocose,
Her prosp'rous merchants, sober and discreet,
Her coxcombs pantaloon'd, and powder'd beaux;
Her pretty lasses tripping on their great toes,
With foreheads white as milk, or any boil'd potatoes.

XXIX.

And from Kinghorn jump hastily along
Her ferrymen and poor inhabitants:
And th' upland* hamlet, where, as told in song,
Tam Lutar play'd of yore his lively rants,
Is left dispeopled of her brose-fed throng,
For eastward scud they now as thick as ants:
Dunfermline, too, so famed for checks and ticks,
Sends out her loom-bred men, with bags and walking-sticks.

XXX.

And market-maids, and apron'd wives, that bring
Their gingerbread in baskets to the Fair;
And cadgers with their creels, that hang by string
From their lean horse-ribs, rubbing off the hair;
And crook-legg'd cripples, that on crutches swing
Their shabby persons with a noble air;
And fiddlers with their fiddles in their cases,
And packmen with their packs of ribbons, gauze, and laces.

XXXI.

And from Kinross, whose dusty streets unpaved
Are whirl'd through heav'n on summer's windy day,
Whose plats of cabbage-bearing ground are laved
By Leven's waves, that clear as crystal play,
Jog her brisk burghers, spruce and cleanly shaved,
Her sullen cutlers and her weavers gay,
Her ploughboys in their botch'd and clumsy jackets,
Her clowns with cobbl'd shoon stuck full of iron tackets.

XXXII.

Next ride on sleek-mane'd horses bay or brown,
Smacking their whips and spurring bloodily,
The writers of industrious Cupar town,
Good social mortals skill'd the pen to ply;

Lo! how their garments as they gallop down,
Waving behind them in the breezes fly;
As upward spurn'd to heav'n's blue bending roof,
Dash'd is the dusty road from every bounding hoof.

XXXIII.

And clerks with ruffled shirts and frizzled hairs,
Their tassel'd half-boots clear as looking-glass,
And Sheriffs learn'd, and unlearn'd Sheriff-mairs,
And messengers-at-arms, with brows of brass,
Come strutting down, or single or in pairs,
Some on high horse and some on lowly ass;
With blacksmiths, barbers, butchers, and their brats,
And some had new hats on, and some came wanting hats.

XXXIV.

Astraddle on their proud steeds full of fire,
From all the tree-girt country-seats around,
Comes many a huffy, many a kindly squire,
In showy garb, worth many a silver pound;
While close behind, in livery's base attire,
Follows poor lacquey with small-bellied hound,
Carrying, upon his shoulders slung, the bag
Wherein his master means to risk his neck for Mag.

XXXV.

From all her lanes and alleys, fair Dundee
Has sent her happy citizens away;
They come with mickle jolliment and glee,
Crossing in clumsy boat their shallow Tay;
Their heads are bonneted most fair to see,
And of the tartan is their back's array:
From Perth, Dunkeld, from Brechin, Forfar, Glams,
Roll down the sweaty crowds, with wearied legs and hams.

XXXVI.

And from the Mearnshire, and from Aberdeen,
Where knit by many a wench is many a stocking,
From Banff and Murray, where of old were seen
The witches by the chief so fain to grow king,
Descend in neckless coats brush'd smooth and clean,
And eke with long pipes in their mouths a-smoking,
The northern people, boisterous and rough,
Bearing both chin and nose bedaub'd with spilth of snuff.

XXXVII.

Comes next from Ross-shire and from Sutherland
The horny-knuckl'd kilted Highlandman:
From where upon the rocky Caithness strand
Breaks the long wave that at the Pole began,
And where Lochfine from her prolific sand
Her herrings gives to feed each bord'ring clan,
Arrive the brogue-shod men of gen'rous eye,
Plaided and breechless all, with Esau's hairy thigh.

XXXVIII.

They come not now to fire the Lowland stacks,
Or foray on the banks of Fortha's firth;
Claymore and broad-sword, and Lochaber-axe,
Are left to rust above the smoky hearth;
Their only arms are bagpipes now and sacks;
Their teeth are set most desp'rately for mirth;
And at their broad and sturdy backs are hung
Great wallets, cramm'd with cheese and bannocks and cold tongue.

XXXIX.

Nor staid away the Islanders, that lie
To buffet of th' Atlantic surge exposed;
From Jura, Arran, Barra, Uist, and Skye,
Piping they come, unshav'd, unbreech'd, unhos'd;
And from that Isle, whose abbey, structur'd high,
Within its precincts holds dead kings enclosed,
Where St Columba oft is seen to waddle
Gown'd round with flaming fire upon the spire astraddle.

XL.

Next from the far-fam'd ancient town of Ayr,
(Sweet Ayr! with crops of ruddy damsels blest,
That, shooting up, and waxing fat and fair,
Shine on thy braes the lilies of the west!)
And from Dumfries, and from Kilmarnock (where
Are night-caps made, the cheapest and the best)
Blythely they ride on ass and mule, with sacks
In lieu of saddles plac'd upon their asses' backs.

* Leslie

XLI.

Close at their heels, bestriding well-trapp'd nag,
Or humbly riding asses' backbone bare,
Come Glasgow's merchants, each with money-bag,
To purchase Dutch lintseed at ANSTER FAIR—
Sagacious fellows all, who well may brag
Of virtuous industry and talents rare;
Th' accomplish'd men o'the counting-room confest,
And fit to crack a joke or argue with the best.

XLII.

Nor keep their homes the Borderers, that stay
Where purls the Jed, and Esk, and little Liddel,
Men that can rarely on the bagpipe play,
And wake th' unsober spirit of the fiddle;
Avow'd freebooters, that have many a day
Stol'n sheep and cow, yet never own'd they did ill;
Great rogues, for sure that wight is but a rogue,
That blots the eighth command from Moses' decalogue.

XLIII.

And some of them in sloop of tarry side,
Come from North-Berwick harbour sailing out;
Others, abhorrent of the sick'ning tide,
Have ta'en the road by Stirling brig about,
And eastward now from long Kirkcaldy ride,
Slugging on their slow-gaited asses stout,
While, dangling, at their backs are bagpipes hung,
And, dangling, hangs a tale on ev'ry rhymer's tongue.

XLIV.

Amid them rides, on lofty ass sublime,
With cadger-like sobriety of canter,
In purple lustihood of youthful prime,
Great in his future glory, ROB THE RANTER
(I give the man what name in little time
He shall acquire from pipe and drone and chanter);
He comes apparell'd like a trim bridegroom,
Fiery and flush'd with hope, and like a god in bloom.

XLV.

No paltry vagrant piper-carle is he,
Whose base-brib'd drone whiffs out its wind for hire,
Who, having stroll'd all day for penny fee,
Couches at night with oxen in the byre;
ROB is a Border laird of good degree,
A many-acred, clever, jolly squire,
One born and shap'd to shine and make a figure,
And bless'd with supple limbs to jump with wondrous vigour.

XLVI.

His waggish face, that speaks a soul jocose,
Seems t'have been cast i'the mould of fun and glee,
And on the bridge of his well-arched nose
Sits Laughter plum'd, and white-wing'd Jollity;
His manly chest a breadth heroïc shows;
Bold is his gesture, dignified and free;
Ev'n as he smites with lash his ass's hip,
'Tis with a seemly grace he whirls his glitt'ring whip.

XLVII.

His coat is of the flashy Lincoln green,
With silver buttons of the prettiest mould;
Each buttonhole and skirt and hem is seen
Sparkishly edg'd with lace of yellow gold;
His breeches of the velvet, smooth and clean,
Are very fair and goodly to behold;
So on he rides, and let him e'en ride on,
We shall again meet ROB to-morrow at the Loan.

XLVIII.

But mark his ass ere off he ride;—some say
He got him from a pilgrim lady fair,
Who, landing once on Joppa's wave-worn quay,
Had bought him of Armenian merchant there,
And prest his padded pack, and rode away
To snuff devotion in with Syria's air;
Then brought him home in hold of stout Levanter,*
All for the great good luck of honest ROB THE RANTER.

XLIX.

Along Fife's western roads, behold, how hie
The travel-sweltry crowds to ANSTER Loan,
Shaded, o'erhead, with clouds of dust that fly
Tarnishing heav'n with darkness not its own!

* Ship trading to and from the Levant, so called by seamen.

And scarcely can the Muse's lynx-sharp eye
Scan, through the dusty nuisance upward blown,
The ruddy plaids, black hats, and bonnets blue,
Of those that rush below, a motley-vestur'd crew!

L.

Nor only was the land with crowds opprest,
That trample forward to th' expected Fair;
The harass'd ocean had no peace or rest,
So many keels her foamy bosom tear;
For, into view, now sailing from the west,
With streamers idling in the bluish air,
Appear the painted pleasure-boats unleaky,
Charg'd with a precious freight—the good folks of Auld Reekie.

LI.

They come, the cream and flow'r of all the Scots,
The children of politeness, science, wit,
Exulting in their bench'd and gaudy boats,
Wherein some joking and some puking sit;
Proudly the pageantry of carvels floats,
As if the salt sea frisk'd to carry it;
The gales vie emulous their sails to wag,
And dally as in love with each long gilded flag.

LII.

Upon the benches seated, I descry
Her gentry; knights, and lairds, and long-nail'd fops;
Her advocates and signet-writers sly;
Her gen'rous merchants, faithful to their shops;
Her lean-cheek'd tetchy critics, who, Oh fy!
Hard-retching, spue upon the sails and ropes;
Her lovely ladies, with their lips like rubies;
Her fiddlers, fuddlers, fools, bards, blockheads, blackguards, boobies.

LIII.

And red-prow'd fisher-boats afar are spied
In south-east, tilting o'er the jasper main,
Whose wing-like oars, dispread on either side,
Now swoop on sea, now rise in sky again:
They come not now, with herring-nets supplied,
Or barbed lines to twitch the haddock train,
But with the townsfolk of Dunbar are laden,
Who burn to see the Fair—man, stripling, wife and maiden.

LIV.

And many a Dane, with ringlets long and red,
And many a starv'd Norwegian, lank and brown
(For over seas the fame of MAG had spread
Afar from Scandinavian town to town),
Maugre the risk of drowning, and the dread
Of *krakens*, isles of fish of droll renown,
Have dar'd to cross the ocean, and now steer
Their long outlandish skiffs direct on ANSTER pier.

LV.

Forward they scud; and soon each pleasure-barge,
And fisher-boats, and skiffs so slim and lax,
On shore their various passengers discharge,
Some hungry, queasy some and white as flax;
Lightly they bound upon the beach's verge,
Glad to unbend their stiffen'd houghs and backs:
But who is that, Oh Muse, with lofty brow,
That from his lacker'd boat is just forth-stepping now?

LVI.

Thou fool! (for I have ne'er since Bavius' days
Had such a dolt to dictate to as thou),
Dost thou not know by that eye's kingly rays,
And by the arch of that celestial brow,
And by the grace his ev'ry step displays,
And by the crowds that round him duck and bow,
That that is good King James, the merriest Monarch
That ever sceptre sway'd since Noah steer'd his own ark?

LVII.

For, as he in his house of Holyrood
Of late was keeping jovially his court,
The gipsey Fame beside his window stood,
And hollow'd in his ear fair MAG'S report:
The Monarch laugh'd, for to his gamesome mood
Accorded well th' anticipated sport;
So here he comes with lord and lady near,
Stepping with regal stride up ANSTER'S eastern pier.

LVIII.

But mark you, boy, how in a loyal ring
(As does obedient subjects well become)
Fife's hospitable lairds salute their King,
And kiss his little finger or his thumb;
That done, their liege lord they escorting bring
To ANSTER House,* that he may eat a crumb;
Where in the stucco'd hall they sit and dine,
And into tenfold joy bedrench their blood with wine.

LIX.

Some with the ladies in the chambers ply
Their bounding elasticity of heel,
Evolving, as they trip it whirlingly,
The merry mazes of th' entangl'd reel;
'Tween roof and floor, they fling, they flirt, they fly,
Their garments swimming round them as they wheel;
The rafters creak beneath the dance's clatter;
Tremble the solid walls with feet that shake and patter.

LX.

Some (wiser they) resolv'd on drinking-bout,
The wines of good Sir John englut amain;
Their glasses soon are fill'd, and soon drunk out,
And soon are bumper'd to the brim again:
Certes that laird is but a foolish lout,
Who does not fuddle now with might and main;
For gen'rous is their host, and, by my sooth,
Was never better wine applied to Scottish mouth.

LXI.

With might and main they fuddle and carouse;
Each glass augments their thirst, and keens their wit;
They swill, they swig, they take a hearty rouse,
Cheering their flesh with Bacchus' benefit,
Till, by and bye, the windows of the house
Go dizzily whirling round them where they sit;
And had you seen the sport, and heard the laughing,
You'd thought that all Jove's gods in ANSTER House sat quaffing.

LXII.

Not such a wassail, fam'd for social glee,
In Shushan's gardens long ago was held,
When Ahasuerus, by a blythe decree,
His turban'd satraps to the bouse compell'd,
And bagg'd their Persian paunches with a sea
Of wine, that from his carved gold they swill'd,
Whilst overhead was stretch'd (a gorgeous show!)
Blue blankets, silver-starr'd—a heav'n of calico!

LXIII.

Nor less is the disport and joy without,
In ANSTER town and Loan, through all the throng:
'Tis but one vast tumultuous jovial rout,
Tumult of laughing, and of gabbling strong;
Thousands and tens of thousands reel about,
With joyous uproar blustering along;
Elbows push boringly on sides with pain,
Wives hustling come on wives, and men dash hard on men.

LXIV.

There lacks no sport: tumblers in wondrous pranks,
High-stag'd, display their limbs' agility;
And now they, mountant from the scaffold's planks,
Kick with their whirling heels the clouds on high,
And now, like cat, upon their dextrous shanks,
They light, and of new monsters cheat the sky;
Whilst motley Merry-Andrew, with his jokes,
Wide through the incorp'rate mob the bursting laugh provokes.

LXV.

Others upon the green, in open air,
Enact the best of Davie Lindsay's plays;
While ballad-singing women do not spare
Their throats, to give good utt'rance to their lays;
And many a leather-lung'd co-chanting pair
Of wood-legg'd sailors, children's laugh and gaze,
Lift to the courts of Jove their voices loud,
Y-hymning their mishaps, to please the heedless crowd.

* Anster House was destroyed to its foundation in 1811.

LXVI.

Meanwhile the sun, fatigued (as well he may)
With shining on a night till seven o'clock,
Beams on each chimney-head a farewell ray,
Illuming into golden shaft its smoke;
And now in sea, far west from Oronsay,
Is dipp'd his chariot-wheel's refulgent spoke,
And now a section of his face appears,
And, diving, now he ducks clean down o'er head and ears.

LXVII.

Anon uprises, with blythe bagpipe's sound,
And shriller din of flying fiddlestick,
On the green loan and meadow-crofts around,
A town of tents, with blankets roofed quick:
A thousand stakes are rooted in the ground;
A thousand hammers clank and clatter thick;
A thousand fiddles squeak and squeal it yare;
A thousand stormy drones out-gasp in groans their air.

LXVIII.

And such a turbulence of gen'ral mirth
Rises from ANSTER Loan upon the sky,
That from his throne Jove starts, and down on earth
Looks, wond'ring what may be the jollity:
He roots his eye on shores of Forthan Firth,
And smerks, as knowing well the market nigh,
And bids his gods and goddesses look down,
To mark the rage of joy that maddens ANSTER town.

LXIX.

From Cellardyke to wind-swept Pittenweem,
And from Balhouffie to Kilrennymill,
Vaulted with blankets, crofts and meadows seem,
So many tents the grassy spaces fill;
Meantime the Moon, yet leaning on the stream,
With fluid silver bathes the welkin chill,
That now earth's half-ball, on the side of night,
Swims in an argent sea of beautiful moonlight.

LXX.

Then to his bed full many a man retires,
On plume, or chaff, or straw, to get a nap,
In houses, tents, in haylofts, stables, byres,
And or without, or with, a warm night-cap:
Yet sleep not all; for by the social fires
Sit many, cuddling round their toddy-sap,
And ever and anon they eat a lunch,
And rinse the mouthfuls down with flav'rous whisky punch.

LXXI.

Some, shuffling paper nothings, keenly read
The Devil's maxims in his painted books,
Till the old serpent in each heart and head
Spits canker, and with wormwood sours their looks:
Some o'er the chess-board's chequer'd champaign lead
Their inch-tall bishops, kings, and queens, and rooks;
Some force, t' enclose the Tod, the wooden Lamb on;
Some shake the pelting dice upon the broad backgammon.

LXXII.

Others, of travell'd elegance polite,
With mingling music MAGGIE'S house surround,
And serenade her all the live-long night
With song and lyre, and flutes' enchanting sound,
Chiming and hymning into fond delight
The heavy night air that o'ershades the ground;
While she, right pensive, in her chamber-nook
Sits pond'ring on th' advice of little Tommy Puck.

CANTO III.

I.

I WISH I had a cottage snug and neat
Upon the top of many-fountain'd Ide,
That I might thence in holy fervour greet
The bright-gown'd Morning tripping up her side:
And when the low Sun's glory-buskin'd feet
Walk on the blue wave of th' Ægean tide,
Oh I would kneel me down, and worship there
The God who garnish'd out a world so bright and fair!

II.

The saffron-elbow'd Morning up the slope
Of heav'n canaries in her jewell'd shoes,
And throws o'er Kelly-law's sheep-nibbled top
Her golden apron dripping kindly dews;
And never, since she first began to hop
Up heav'n's blue causeway, of her beams profuse,
Shone there a dawn so glorious and so gay,
As shines the merry dawn of ANSTER Market-day.

III.

Round through the vast circumference of sky
One speck of small cloud cannot eye behold,
Save in the East some fleeces bright of dye,
That stripe the hem of heav'n with woolly gold,
Whereon are happy angels wont to lie
Lolling, in amaranthine flow'rs enroll'd,
That they may spy the precious light of God,
Flung from the blessed East o'er the fair Earth abroad.

IV.

The fair Earth laughs through all her boundless range,
Heaving her green hills high to greet the beam;
City and village, steeple, cot, and grange,
Gilt as with Nature's purest leaf-gold seem;
The heaths and upland muirs, and fallows, change
Their barren brown into a ruddy gleam,
And, on ten thousand dew-bent leaves and sprays,
Twinkle ten thousand suns, and fling their petty rays.

V.

Up from their nests and fields of tender corn
Full merrily the little sky-larks spring,
And on their dew-bedabbled pinions borne,
Mount to the heav'n's blue key-stone flickering;
They turn their plume-soft bosoms to the morn,
And hail the genial light, and cheer'ly sing;
Echo the gladsome hills and vallies round,
As half the bells of Fife ring loud and swell the sound.

VI.

For when the first up-sloping ray was flung
On ANSTER steeple's swallow-harb'ring top,
Its bell and all the bells around were rung
Sonorous, jangling loud without a stop;
For toilingly each bitter beadle swung,
Ev'n till he smok'd with sweat, his greasy rope,
And almost broke his bell-wheel, ush'ring in
The morn of ANSTER FAIR, with tinkle-tankling din.

VII.

And, from our steeple's pinnacle outspread,
The town's long colours flare and flap on high,
Whose anchor, blazon'd fair in green and red,
Curls, pliant to each breeze that whistles by;
Whilst on the boltsprit stern and topmast-head
Of brig and sloop that in the harbour lie,
Streams the red gaudery of flags in air,
All to salute and grace the morn of ANSTER FAIR.

VIII.

Forthwith from house and cellar, tent and byre,
Rous'd by the clink of bells that jingle on,
Uncabin'd, rush the multitude like fire,
Furious and squeezing forward to the Loan;*
The son, impatient, leaves his snail-slow sire;
The daughter leaves her mam to trot alone;
So madly leap they, man, wife, girl, and boy,
As if the senseless Earth they kick'd for very joy.

IX.

And such the noise of feet that trampling pass,
And tongues that roar and rap from jaw to jaw,
As if ten thousand chariots, wheel'd with brass,
Came hurling down the sides of Largo-law;
And such the number of the people was,
As when in day of Autumn, chill and raw,
His small clouds Eurus sends, a vap'ry train,
Streaming in scatter'd rack, exhaustless, from the main.

* Anster Loan must, in those days, have been of great extent; at present its limits are contracted almost to the breadth of the highway.

X.

For who like arrant slugs can keep their heads
In contact with their pillows now unstirr'd?
Grandfathers leave their all-year-rumpl'd beds,
With moth-eat breeches now their loins to gird,
And, drawn abroad on tumbrils and on sleds
Chat off their years, and sing like vernal bird;
Men, whom cold agues into leanness freeze,
Imblanketed walk out, and snuff the kindly breeze.

XI.

And flea-bit wives, on whose old arms and cheeks
The spoiler Time hath driv'n his furrowing plough,
Whose cold dry bones have all the winter weeks
Hung shiv'ring o'er their chimney's peat-fed glow,
Now warm and flexible, and lithe as leeks,
Wabbingly walk to see the joyous show;
What wonder? when each brick and pavement stone
Wish'd it had feet that day to walk to ANSTER Loan!

XII.

Upon a little dappled nag, whose mane
Seem'd to have robb'd the steeds of Phaeton,
Whose bit, and pad, and fairly-fashion'd rein,
With silvery adornments richly shone,
Came MAGGIE LAUDER forth, enwheel'd with train
Of knights and lairds around her trotting on:
At James' right hand she rode, a beauteous bride,
That well deserv'd to go by haughtiest Monarch's side.

XIII.

Her form was as the Morning's blythesome star,
That, capp'd with lustrous coronet of beams,
Rides up the dawning orient in her car,
New-wash'd, and doubly fulgent from the streams—
The Chaldee shepherd eyes her light afar,
And on his knees adores her as she gleams;
So shone the stately form of MAGGIE LAUDER,
And so th' admiring crowds pay homage and applaud her.

XIV.

Each little step her trampling palfrey took
Shak'd her majestic person into grace,
And, as at times, his glossy sides she strook
Endearingly with whip's green silken lace,
(The prancer seem'd to court such kind rebuke,
Loitering with wilful tardiness of pace);
By Jove, the very waving of her arm
Had pow'r a brutish lout t' unbrutify and charm!

XV.

Her face was as the summer cloud, whereon
The dawning sun delights to rest his rays!
Compar'd with it, old Sharon's vale, o'ergrown
With flaunting roses, had resign'd its praise;
For why? Her face with heav'n's own roses shone,
Mocking the morn, and witching men to gaze;
And he that gaz'd with cold unsmitten soul,
That blockhead's heart was ice thrice bak'd beneath the Pole.

XVI.

Her locks, apparent tufts of wiry gold,
Lay on her lily temples, fairly dangling,
And on each hair, so harmless to behold,
A lover's soul hung mercilessly strangling;
The piping silly zephyrs vied t' unfold
The tresses in their arms so slim and tangling,
And thrid in sport these lover-noosing snares,
And play'd at hide-and-seek amid the golden hairs.

XVII.

Her eye was as an honour'd palace, where
A choir of lightsome Graces frisk and dance;
What object drew her gaze, how mean soe'er,
Got dignity and honour from the glance;
Woe to the man on whom she unaware
Did the dear witch'ry of her eye elance!
'Twas such a thrilling, killing, keen regard—
May Heav'n from such a look preserve each tender bard!

XVIII.

Beneath its shading tucker heav'd a breast
Fashion'd to take with ravishment mankind;
For never did the flimsy Coan vest
Hide such a bosom in its gauze of wind;

Ev'n a pure angel, looking, had confest
A sinless transport passing o'er his mind;
For, in the nicest turning-loom of Jove,
Turn'd were these charming hills, t' inspire a holy love.

XIX.

So on she rode in virgin majesty,
Charming the thin dead air to kiss her lips,
And with the light and grandeur of her eye
Shaming the proud sun into dim eclipse;
While round her presence clust'ring far and nigh,
On horseback some, with silver spurs and whips,
And some afoot with shoes of dazzling buckles,
Attended knights, and lairds, and clowns with horny knuckles.

XX.

Not with such crowd surrounded, nor so fair
In form, rode forth Semiramis of old,
On chariot where she sat in iv'ry chair
Beneath a sky of carbuncle and gold,
When to Euphrates' banks to take the air,
Or her new rising brickwalls to behold,
Abroad she drove, whilst round her wheels were pour'd
Satrap, and turban'd squire, and pursy Chaldee lord.

XXI.

Soon to the Loan came Mag, and from her pad
Dismounting with a queen-like dignity
(So from his buoyant cloud, man's heart to glad,
Lights a bright angel on a hill-top high),
On a small mound, with turfy greenness clad,
She lit, and walk'd enchantment on the eye;
Then on two chairs, that on its top stood ready,
Down sat the good King James, and Anster's bonny lady.

XXII.

Their chairs were finely carv'd, and overlaid
With the thin lustre of adorning gold,
And o'er their heads a canopy was spread
Of arras, flower'd with figures manifold,
Supported by four boys, of silver made,
Whose glitt'ring hands the vault of cloth uphold;
On each side sat or stood, to view the sport,
Stout lord and lady fair, the flow'r of Scotland's court.

XXIII.

On their gilt chairs they scarce had time to sit,
When uprose, sudden, from th' applauding mob,
A shout enough to startle hell, and split
The roundness of the granite-ribbed globe;
The mews of May's steep islet, terror-smit,
Clang'd correspondent in a shrill hubbub,
And had the moon then hung above the main,
Crack'd had that horrid shout her spotted orb in twain.

XXIV.

Thrice did their shouting make a little pause,
That so their lungs might draw recruiting air,
Thrice did the stormy tumult of applause
Shake the Fife woods, and fright the foxes there;
Sky rattled, and Kilbrachmont's crows and daws,
Alarm'd, sung hoarsely o'er their callow care:
Oh never, sure, in Fife's town-girdled shire,
Was heard, before or since, a shout so loud and dire!

XXV.

Nor ceas'd th' acclaim when ceas'd the sound of voice,
For fiddlesticks, in myriads, bick'ring fast,
Shreik'd on their shrunken guts a shrilling noise;
And pipe, and drone, with whistle, and with blast,
Consorted, humm'd and squeak'd, and swell'd the joys
With furious harmony too high to last;
And such a hum of pipe and drone was there,*
As if on earth men pip'd, and devils dron'd in air.

XXVI.

Thus did the crowd with fiddle, lungs, and drone,
Congratulate fair Maggie and their King,
Till at the last, wide-spreading round the Loan,
They form'd of huge circumference a ring,
Enclosing green space, bare of bush and stone,
Where might the asses run and suitors spring;
Upon its southmost end, high chair'd, were seen
The Monarch and the dame, and overlook'd the green.

XXVII.

Anon, the King's stout trumpet blew aloud,
Silence imposing on the rabble's roar;
Silent as summer sky stood all the crowd—
Each bag was strangl'd and could snort no more
(So sinks the roaring of the foamy flood,
When Neptune's clarion twangs from shore to shore).
Then through his trump he bawl'd with such a stress,
One might have known his words a mile beyond Crawness.

XXVIII.

"Ho! hark ye, merry mortals! hark ye, ho!
The King now speaks, nor what he speaks is vain;
This day's amount of bus'ness well ye know,
So what you know I will not tell again:
He hopes your asses are more swift than doe;
He hopes your sacks are strong as iron chain;
He hopes your bags and pipes are swoln and screw'd;
He hopes your rhyme-cramm'd brains are in a famous mood.

XXIX.

For, verily, in Anster's beauteous dame
Awaits the victor no despis'd reward;
Sith well she merits that the starry frame
Should drop Apollo on that grassy sward,
That so he might, by clever jumping, claim
A fairer Daphne than whom once he marr'd;
So fair is Mag: yet not her charms alone,
A present from the King shall be the victor's own.

XXX.

For as a dow'r, along with Maggie's hand,
The monarch shall the conqueror present
With ten score acres of the royal land,
All good of soil, and of the highest rent;
Near where Dunfermline's palace-turrets stand,
They stretch, array'd in wheat, their green extent:
With such a gift the King shall crown to-day
The gen'rous toils of him who bears the prize away.

XXXI.

And he, prize-blest, shall enter Maggie's door,
Who shall in all the trials victor be;
Or, if there hap no victor in the four,
He who shall shine and conquer in the three;
But, should sly fortune give to two or more,
An equal chance in equal victory,
'Tis Mag's of these to choose the dearest beau:—
So bring your asses in, bring in your asses, ho!"

XXXII.

Scarce from his clam'rous brass the words were blown,
When from the globe of people issued out
Donkies in dozens, and in scores, that shone
In purple some, and some in plainer clout,
With many a wag astraddle plac'd thereon,
Green-coated knight, and laird, and clumsy lout,
That one and all came burning with ambition,
To try their asses' speed in awkward competition.

XXXIII.

And some sat wielding silver-headed whips,
Whisking their asses' ears with silken thong;
Some thrash'd and thwack'd their sturdy hairy hips,
With knotted cudgels ponderous and strong;
And some had spurs, whose every rowel dips
Amid their ribs an inch of iron long;
And some had bridles gay and bits of gold,
And some had hempen reins most shabby to behold.

XXXIV.

Amid them entered, on the listed space,
Great Rob (the Ranter was his after name),
With Fun's broad ensign hoisted in his face,
And aug'ring to himself immortal fame;
And aye, upon the hillock's loftier place,
Where sat his destin'd spouse, the blooming dame,
A glance he flung, regardless of the reins,
And felt the rapid love glide tingling through his veins.

* Such a yell was there,
As if men fought upon the earth,
And fiends in upper air.—Scott's *Marmion*.

XXXV.

She, too, upon the Bord'rer's manly size
With prepossessing favour fix'd her sight;
For woman's sharp and well-observing eyes
Soon single out the seemliest, stateliest wight;
And, oh! (she to herself thus silent sighs)
Were't but the will of Puck the dapper sprite,
I could—La! what a grace of form divine!—
I could, in sooth, submit to lose my name in thine!

XXXVI.

Forward they rode, to where the King and MAG
O'erlook'd, superior, from the southern mound,
When from his brute alighting every wag,
His person hunch'd into a bow profound,
And almost kiss'd his shoes' bedusted tag,
Grazing with nose most loyally the ground,
As earthward crook'd they their corporeal frames
Into obeisance due, before the gracious James.

XXXVII.

"Rise, rise, my lads," the jovial monarch said,
"Here is not now the fitting place to ply
The courtier's and the dancing-master's trade,
Nuzzling the nasty ground obsequiously;
Up, up—put hat and bonnet upon head—
The chilling dew still drizzles from the sky;
Up—tuck your coats succinct around your bellies;
Mount, mount your asses' backs like clever vaulting fellows.

XXXVIII.

And see, that, when the race's sign is giv'n,
Each rider whirl his whip with swingeing might,
Or toss his whizzing cudgel up to heav'n,
That with more goodly bang it down may light;
And let the spur's blood-thirsty teeth be driv'n
Through hide and hair by either heel aright,
For 'tis a beast most sluggish, sour, and slow;
Be mounting then, my hearts, and range ye in a row.

XXXIX.

And look ye northwards—note yon mastlike pole
Tassel'd with ribbons and betrimm'd with clout,
Yon—mark it—is the race-ground's northern goal,
Where you must turn your asses' heads about,
And jerk them southward, till with gladsome soul
You reach that spot whence now you're setting out;
And he that reaches first, shall loud be shouted
The happy, happy man—I'll say no more about it."

XL.

This said, they like the glimpse of lightning quick,
Upvaulted on their backbones asinine,
And marshal'd, by the force of spur and stick,
The long-ear'd lubbards in an even line:
Then sat, awaiting that momentous nick
When James's herald should y-twang the sign:
Each whip was rear'd aloft in act to crack,
Each cudgel hung in sky surcharged with stormy thwack.

XLI.

Frisk'd with impatient flutter every heart
As the brisk anxious blood began to jump;
Each human ear prick'd up it fleshiest part,
To catch the earliest notice of the trump;
When hark! with blast that spoke the sign to start,
The brass-toned clarion gave the air a thump,
Whoop—off they go; halloo—they shoot—they fly!
They spur—they whip—they crack—they bawl—they curse—they cry!

XLII.

A hundred whips, high-toss'd in ether, sung
Tempestuous, flirting up and down like fire;
'Tween sky and earth as many cudgels swung
Their gnarl'd lengths in formidable gyre,
And, hissing, from their farther ends down flung
A storm of wooden bangs and anguish dire;
Woe to the beastly ribs, and skulls, and backs,
Foredoom'd to bear the weight of such unwieldy cracks!

XLIII.

Woe to the beastly bowels, doom'd, alas!
To bear the spur's sharp steely agony;
For through the sore-gall'd hides of every ass
Squirts the vext blood in gush of scarlet dye,
While as they slug along the hoof-crush'd grass,
Rises a bray so horrid and so high,
As if all Bashan's bulls, with fat o'ergrown,
Had bellow'd on the green of ANSTER's frighted Loan.

XLIV.

Who can in silly pithless words paint well
The pithy feats of that laborious race?
Who can the cudgellings and whippings tell,
The hurry, emulation, joy, disgrace?
'Twould take for tongue the clapper of a bell,
To speak the total wonders of the chace;
'Twould need a set of sturdy brassy lungs,
To tell the mangled whips, and shatter'd sticks and rungs.

XLV.

Each rider pushes on to be the first,
Nor has he now an eye to look behind;
One ass trots smartly on, though like to burst
With bounding blood, and scantiness of wind;
Another, by his master bann'd and cursed,
Goes backward through perversity of mind,
Inching along in motion retrograde,
Contrarious to the course which Scotland's Monarch bade.

XLVI.

A third obdurate stands and cudgel-proof,
And steadfast as th' unchisel'd rock of flint,
Regardless though the heaven's high marble roof
Should fall upon his skull with mortal dint,
Or though conspiring earth, beneath his hoof,
Should sprout up coal with fiery flashes in't,
Whilst on his back his griev'd and waspish master,
The stubborner he stands, still bangs and bans the faster.

XLVII.

Meantime, the rabblement, with fav'ring shout,
And clapping hand, set up so loud a din,
As almost with stark terror frighted out
Each ass's soul from his partic'lar skin;
Rattled the bursts of laughter round about,
Grinn'd every phiz with mirth's peculiar grin,
As through the Loan they saw the cuddies awkward
Bustling some straight, some thwart, some forward, and some backward.

XLVIII.

As when the clouds, by gusty whirlwind riv'n,
And whipp'd into confusion pitchy-black,
Detach'd, fly diverse round the cope of heav'n,
Reeling and jostling in uncertain rack,
And some are northward, some are southward driv'n,
With storm embroiling all the zodiac,
Till the clash'd clouds send out the fiery flash,
And peals, with awful roll, the long loud thunder crash.

XLIX.

Just in such foul confusion and alarm
Jostle the cuddies with rebellious mind,
All drench'd with sweat, internally so warm,
They loudly bray before, and belch behind:
But who is yon, the foremost of the swarm,
That scampers fleetly as the rain-raw wind?
'Tis ROBERT SCOTT, if I can trust my eyne;
I know the Bord'rer well, by his long coat of green!

L.

See how his bright whip brandish'd round his head,
Flickers like streamer in the northern skies!
See how his ass on earth with nimble tread
Half-flying rides, in air half-riding flies,
As if a pair of ostrich wings, out-spread,
To help him on, had sprouted from his thighs!
Well scamper'd ROB, well whipt, well spurr'd, my boy!
O haste ye, RANTER, haste—rush—gallop to thy joy!

LI.

The pole is gain'd; his ass's head he turns
Southward, to tread the trodden ground again;
Sparkles like flint the cuddy's hoof and burns,
Seeming to leave a smoke upon the plain;
His bitted mouth the foam impatient churns;
Sweeps his broad tail behind him like a train;
Speed, cuddy, speed—Oh, slacken not thy pace!
Ten minutes more like this, and thou shalt gain the race!

LII.

He comes careering on the sounding Loan,
With pace unslacken'd hast'ning to the knoll,
And as he meets with those that hobble on
With northward heads to gain the ribbon'd pole,
Ev'n by his forceful fury are o'erthrown
His long-ear'd brethren in confusion droll;
For as their sides, he passing, slightly grazes,
By that collision shock'd, down roll the founder'd asses.

LIII.

Heels over head they tumble; ass on ass
They dash, and twenty times roll o'er and o'er,
Lubberly wallowing along the grass,
In beastly ruin and with beastly roar;
While their vexed riders in poor plight, alas!
Flung from their saddles three long ells and more,
Bruis'd and commingl'd, with their cuddies sprawl,
Cursing th' impetuous brute whose conflict caus'd their fall.

LIV.

With hats upon their heads they down did light,
Withouten hats disgracefully they rose;
Clean were their faces ere they fell and bright,
But dirty-fac'd they got up on their toes;
Strong were their sinews ere they fell and tight,
Hip-shot they stood up, sprain'd with many woes;
Blythe were their aspects ere the ground they took,
Grim louring rose they up, with crabbed ghastful look.

LV.

And, to augment their sorrow and their shame,
A hail abhorr'd of nauseous rotten eggs,
In rascal vollies from the rabble came
Opprobrious, on their bellies, heads, and legs,
Smearing with slime that ill their clothes became,
Whereby they stunk like wash-polluted pigs,
For in each sputt'ring shell a juice was found,
Foul as the dribbling pus of Philoctetes' wound.

LVI.

Ah! then with grievous limp along the ground,
They sought their hats that had so flown away,
And some were, cuff'd and much disaster'd, found,
And haply some not found unto this day:
Meanwhile, with vast and undiminish'd bound,
Sheer through the bestial wreck and disarray,
The brute of Mesopotam hurries on,
And in his madding speed devours the trembling Loan.

LVII.

Speed, cuddy, speed—one short, short minute more,
And finish'd is thy toil, and won the race!
Now, one half minute and thy toils are o'er—
His toils are o'er, and he has gain'd the base!
He shakes his tail, the conscious conqueror;
Joy peeps through his stupidity of face;
He seems to wait the Monarch's approbation,
As quiver his long ears with self-congratulation.

LVIII.

Straight from the stirrup Rob dislodg'd his feet,
And, flinging from his grasp away the rein,
Off sprung, and louting in obeisance meet,
Did lowly duty to his King again:
His King with salutation kind did greet
Him the victorious champion of the plain,
And bade him rise, and up the hillock skip,
That he the royal hand might kiss with favour'd lip.

LIX.

Whereat, obedient to the high command,
Great Robert Scott, upbolting from the ground,
Rush'd up, in majesty of gesture grand,
To where the Monarch sat upon the mound,
And kiss'd the hard back of his hairy hand,
Respectfully, as fits a Monarch crown'd;
But with a keener ecstacy he kiss'd
The dearer tend'rer back of Maggie's downy fist.

LX.

Then took the trumpeter his clarion good,
And, in a sharp and violent exclaim,
Out from the brass among the multitude,
Afar sent conqu'ring Rob's illustrious name;
Which heard, an outcry of applause ensued,
That shook the dank dew from the starry frame;
Great Robert's name was halloo'd through the mob,
And Echo blabb'd to heav'n the name of mighty Rob.

LXI.

But, unapplauded, and in piteous case,
The laggers on their vanquish'd asses slow,
Shame-stung, with scurvy length of rueful face,
Ride sneaking off to save them further woe;
For, cramm'd with slime and stench and vile disgrace,
Th' abominable shells fly moe and moe,
Till slink the men amid the press of folk,
Secure from shame, and slime, and egg's unwholesome yolk.

CANTO IV.

I.

There are who say (the devil pinch them for it!)
That I am but a silly poetaster,
A trencher-licker in Apollo's court,
A sorry boy, an arrant paper-waster;
The louts! I'll make them mend their bad report,
Or on their mouths will clap a pitchy plaster;
Ye blockheads, read my ass-race, and avow it,
That I'm Homeric stuff—ay, every inch a poet.

II.

Again, the herald at the King's desire,
His tube of metal to his mouth applied,
And, with a roysting brazen clangour dire,
Round to the heaving mass of rabble cried,
Inviting every blade of fun and fire,
That wish'd to jump in hempen bondage tied,
Forthwith to start forth from the people's ring,
And fetch his sack in hand, and stand before the King.

III.

No sooner in the sky his words were blown,
Than through the multitude's compacted press,
Wedging their bodies, push to th' open Loan
Th' audacious men of boasted springiness;
Some Sampson-thigh'd, and large and big of bone,
Brawn-burden'd, six feet high or little less,
Some lean, flesh-wither'd, stinted, oatmeal things,
Yet hardy, tough, and smart, with heels like steely springs.

IV.

Nor were the offer'd candidates a few;
In hundreds forth they issue, mad with zeal
To try, in feats which haply some shall rue,
Their perilous alacrity of heel;
Each mortal brings his sack wherein to mew
As in a pliant prison, strong as steel,
His guiltless corse, and clog his nat'ral gait
With cumberance of cloth, embarrassing and strait.

V.

And in their hands they hold to view on high
Vain-gloriously their bags of sturdy thread,
And toss and wave them in th' affronted sky,
Like honour-winning trophies o'er their head,
Assuming merit, that they dare defy
The dangers of a race so droll and dread:
Ah, boast not, sirs, for premature's the brag;
'Tis time in troth to boast when off you put the bag!

VI.

Onward they hasten'd, clamorous and loud,
To where the Monarch sat upon the knoll,
And, having to his presence humbly bow'd,
And bared of reverential hat their poll,
Their dirty sacks they wagg'd, erect and proud,
Impatient, in their fiery fit of soul,
And pertly shak'd, ev'n in the Monarch's eyes,
A cloud of meal and flour that whirling round them flies.

VII.

But as the good King saw them thus prepar'd
To have their persons scabbarded in cloth,
He order'd twenty soldiers of his guard,
All swashing fellows and of biggest growth,

To step upon the green Loan's listed sward,
That they may lend assistance, nothing loath,
To plunge into their pliant sheaths, neck-deep,
Th' ambitious men that dare such over-vent'rous leap.

VIII.

They stepp'd obedient down, and in a trice
Put on the suitors' comical array;
Each sack gap'd wide its monstrous orifice,
To swallow to the neck its living prey;
And, as a swineherd puts in poke a grice
To carry from its sty some little way,
So did the soldiers plunge the men within
Their yawning gloomy gulfs, ev'n to the neck and chin.

IX.

As when of yore the Roman forum, split
By earthquake, yawn'd a black tremendous hole,
Voracious, deep'ning still, though flung in it
Were stones and trees with all their branches whole,
Till, in a noble patriotic fit,
The younker Curtius of devoted soul
Down headlong yarely gallop'd, horse and all,
And dash'd his gallant bones to atoms by the fall:

X.

So fearlessly these men of fair Scotland
(Though not to death) down plung'd into their sacks,
Entoiling into impotence to stand
Their feet, and mobbling legs, and sides, and backs,
Till tightly drawn was every twisted band,
And knotted firmly round their valiant necks,
That, in their rival rage to jump forthright,
They might not struggle off their case of sackcloth tight.

XI.

Nor, when their bodies were accoutred well,
Upon their cumber'd feet stood all upright,
But some, unpractis'd or uncautious, fell
Sousing with lumpish undefended weight,
And roll'd upon the turf full many an ell,
Incapable of uprise, sad in plight;
Till, rais'd again, with those that keep their feet,
Join'd in a line they stand, each in his winding-sheet.

XII.

Oh 'twas an awkward and ridic'lous show,
To see a long sack-muffl'd line of men,
With hatless heads all peeping in a row
Forth from the long smocks that their limbs contain!
For in the wide abyss of cloth below,
Their legs are swallow'd and their stout arms twain;
From chin to toe one shapeless lump they stand,
In clumsy uniform, without leg, arm, or hand!

XIII.

And such their odd appearance was, and show
Of human carcasses in sackcloth dight,
As when the trav'ller, when he haps to go
Down to Grand Cairo in the Turk's despite,
Sees in her chamber'd catacombs below
Full many a mummy horribly upright,
A grisly row of grimly-garnish'd dead,
That seem to pout, and scowl, and shake the brainless head.

XIV.

So queer and so grotesque to view they stood,
All ready at the trump's expected sound,
To take a spring of monstrous altitude,
And scour with majesty of hop the ground:
Yet not so soon the starting-blast ensued;
For, as they stand intent upon the bound,
The hum'rous Monarch, eyeing their array,
Gave then his good advice before they rush'd away.

XV.

"Oh friends! since now your loins are girt," he cried,
"For journey perilous and full of toil,
Behoves it you right cautiously to guide
Your ticklish steps along such vexing soil;
For sorry is the road, and well supplied
With stumps and stumbling-blocks and pits of guile,
And snares, and latent traps with earth bestown,
To catch you by the heels, and bring you groaning down.

XVI.

And woe betide, if unaware you hap
Your body's well-adjusted poise to lose,
For bloody bump and sorrowful sore slap
Await your falling temple, brow, and nose;
And, when once down and fetter'd in a trap,
Hard task 'twill be to extricate your toes:
So, lads, if you regard your noses' weal,
Pray pick out stable steps, and tread with wary heel.

XVII.

And he that longest time without a fall
Shall urge his sad perplexity of way,
And leave behind his fellow-trav'llers all,
Growling for help and grovelling on the clay;
He, for his laudable exertions, shall
Be sung the second victor of the day:
And so God speed you, sirs!" The monarch spoke,
And on the surging air the trumpet's signal broke.

XVIII.

As when a thunderclap, preluding nigh
A storm, growls on the frontiers of the west,
Ere yet the cloud, slow toiling up the sky,
Hath in its mass the mid-day sun suppress,
Alarm'd the timid doves that basking lie
Upon their cot's slope sunny roof at rest,
At once up-flutter in a sudden fray,
And poise th' unsteady wing, and squir in air away:

XIX.

So started, as the herald gave the blast,
At once the suitors in their sacks away,
With gallant up-spring, notable and vast,
A neck-endang'ring violent assay:
The solid earth, as up to sky they past,
Push'd back, seem'd to retire a little way;
And, as they up-flew furious from the ground,
The gash'd and wounded air whizz'd audibly a sound.

XX.

As when on summer eve a soaking rain
Hath after drought bedrench'd the tender grass,
If chance, in pleasant walk along the plain,
Brushing with foot the pearl-hung blades you pass,
A troop of frogs oft leaps from field of grain,
Marshall'd in line, a foul unseemly race,
They halt a space, then vaulting up they fly,
As if they long'd to sit on Iris' bow on high:

XXI.

So leap'd the men, half-sepulchred in sack,
Up-swinging, with their shapes be-monstring sky,
And coursed in air a semicircle track,
Like to the feath'ry-footed Mercury;
Till, spent their impetus, with sounding thwack
Greeted their heels the green ground sturdily;
And some, descending, kept their balance well,
Unbalanc'd some came down, and boisterously fell.

XXII.

The greeted earth beneath the heavy thwacks
Of feet that centripetal down alight,
Of tingling elbows, bruised loins and backs,
Shakes passive, yet indignant of the weight;
For, o'er her bosom, in their plaguy sacks,
Cumbrously roll (a mortifying sight!)
Wreck'd burgher, knight, and laird, and clown pell-mell,
Prostrate, in grievance hard, too terrible to tell.

XXIII.

And aye they struggle at an effort strong
To reinstate their feet upon the plain,
Half-elbowing, half-kneeing, sore and long
Abortively, with bitter sweat and pain,
Till, half upraised, they to their forehead's wrong
Go with a buffet rapping down again,
And sprawl and flounce, and wallow on their backs,
Crying loud for help t' uncord their dolorous sacks.

XXIV.

Not in severer anguish of distress
The fabled giant under Etna lies,
Though rocks and tree-proud promontories press
With vengeance fitting Jove his ruffian size;

Wallowing supine beneath the mountain's stress,
Half-broil'd with brimstone ever hot, he fries,
And, as he turns his vasty carcass o'er,
Out-belches molten rocks, and groans a hideous roar.

XXV.

In such vexatious plight the mortals lie
That founder'd on the threshold of the race,
Where let us leave them, and lift up our eye
To those that keep their feet, and hop apace.
Gramercy! how they bounce it lustily,
Maugre their misery of woven case!
How with their luggage scour they o'er the Loan,
And toil, and moil, and strain, and sweat, and lumber on.

XXVI.

Strange thing it is that men so penn'd in clout,
So wound with swaddling-clothes, should trip it so!
See how with spring incomparably stout,
Spurning the nasty earth, they upward go,
As if they wish'd t'unsocket and knock out
With poll the candles that i'the night-sky glow!
See how attain'd the zenith of their leap,
Earthward they sink again with long descending sweep!

XXVII.

They halt not still; again aloft they hop,
As if they tread the rainbow's gilded bend,
Again upon the quaking turf they drop,
Lighting majestic on their proper end;
I ween, they do not make a moment's stop;
Oh who may now his precious time misspend?
'Tis bustling all and swelt'ring—but behold!
Swop! there a jumper falls aflat upon the mould!

XXVIII.

How can his gyved arms be forward thrust
To break the downsway of his fall just now?
Ah, 'tis his tender nose alone that must
In loving-kindness save from bump his brow;
His soft nose, to its site and duty just,
Is martyr'd to its loyalty, I trow,
For, flatten'd into anguish by the clod,
It weeps, see how it weeps, warm trickling tears of blood!

XXIX.

He bleeds, and from his nostrils' double sluice
Redly bedews the sod of Anster Loan,
Till, in a puddle of his own heart's juice,
He welt'ring writhes with lamentable moan,
And sends his sack in curses to the deuce,
Banning the hour when first he put it on;
Meanwhile, o'erlabour'd in their hobbling pother,
Douse, drops a second down, and whap! there sinks another!

XXX.

Wearied, half-bursten with their hot turmoil,
Their lungs like Vulcan's bellows panting strong,
Pow'rless to stand, or prosecute their toil,
Successively they souse and roll along,
Till, round and round, the carcass-cumber'd soil
Is strewn with havock of the jumping throng,
That make a vain endeavour off to shuffle
The cruel sackcloth coil, that does their persons muffle.

XXXI.

All in despair have sunk, save yonder two
That still their perpendic'lar posture keep,
The only remnant of the jumping crew,
That urge their emulous persisting leap;
Oddspittkins! how with poise exactly true
Clean forward to the ribbon'd pole they sweep;
I cannot say that one is 'fore the other,
So equal side by side they plod near one another.

XXXII.

The pole is gain'd, and to the glorious sun
They turn their sweaty faces round again;
With inextinguishable rage to run,
Southward unflagging and unquell'd they strain.
What! Is not yonder face, where young-ey'd Fun
And Laughter seem enthron'd to hold their reign,
One seen before—ev'n Rob the Bord'rer's phiz?
Ay, now I ken it well, by'r lakin it is his!

XXXIII.

Haste, haste ye, Rob, half-hop, half-run, half-fly,
Wriggle and wrestle in thy bag's despite;
So! shoot like cannon-bullet to the sky;
So! stably down upon thy soles alight;
Up, up again, and fling it gallantly!
Well flung, my Rob, thou art a clever wight;
'Sblood, now thy rival is a step before;
String, string thy sinews up, and jump three yards and more!

XXXIV.

'Tis done—but who is he that at thy side
Thy rival vigorously marches so?
Declare, oh Muse, since thou art eagle-ey'd,
And thine it is, ev'n at a glance, to know
Each son of mortal man, though mumm'd and tied
In long disguising sack from chin to toe!
"He, boy, that marches in such clumsy state,
Is old Edina's child, a waggish Advocate:

XXXV.

For he too has for Maggie Lauder dar'd
To prove the mettle of his heel and shin,
A jolly wight, who trickishly prepar'd
A treach'rous sack to scarf his body in;
A sack, whose bottom was with damp impair'd,
Fusty, half-rotten, mouldy, frail, and thin,
That he, unseen, might in the race's pother,
Thrust out one helpful leg, and keep incag'd its brother.

XXXVI.

And seest thou not his right leg peeping out,
Enfranchis'd, trait'rously to help his gait,
Whilst th'other, still imprison'd in its clout,
Tardily follows its more active mate?"
I see it well—'tis treachery, no doubt;
Beshrew thee now, thou crafty Advocate!
Unfair, unfair! 'tis quite unfair, I say,
Thus with illicit leg to prop thy perilous way!

XXXVII.

Half-free, half-clogg'd, he steals his quick advance,
Nearing at each unlicens'd step the base,
While honest Robert plies the hardier dance,
Most faithful to his sack and to the race;
Now for it, Rob—another jump—but once—
And overjump'd is all th' allotted space;
By Jove, they both have reach'd the base together,
Gain'd is the starting-line, yet gain'd the race hath neither!

XXXVIII.

At once they bend each man his body's frame
Into a bow, before the King and Mag;
At once they ope their lips to double-claim
The race's palm (for now Auld Reekie's wag,
As snail draws in its horn, had, fy for shame!
Drawn his dishonest leg into his bag);
At once they plead the merits of their running,
Good Rob with proofs of force, the wag with quips and punning.

XXXIX.

Me lists not now to variegate my song
With all his sophistry and quip and pun;
Oh 'twould be tiresome, profitless, and long,
To quote his futile arguments air-spun,
His oratoric tricks that dress the wrong
In garb of right, his gybes of naughty fun,
Quiddits and quillits that may well confound one,
And make a rotten sack appear a goodly sound one!

XL.

But Robert to the people's sight appeal'd,
And to the eyes of royal James and Mag,
Who saw his rival's foot too plain reveal'd,
And impudently peering from its bag:
He said 'twas roguish thus to come a-field
With such a paltry hypocritic rag;
The very hole through which his foot was thrust,
Gapes evidence to prove his claim was quite unjust.

XLI.

Long was the plea, and longer it had been,
Had not the populace begun aloud
T'express with clamour their resentment keen
At him who quibbl'd in his rotten shroud:
A thousand hands, uplifted high, were seen
Over the hats and bonnets of the crowd,
With paly hens' eggs that their fingers clench,
To hurl upon his sack conviction, slime, and stench.

XLII.

Which, when he saw all white upheld to view,
Ready to rattle shame about his ears,
He straightway the perplexing claim withdrew,
Urg'd to resign by his judicious fears;
For had he but one minute staid or two,
He for his subtilties, and quirks, and jeers,
Had reap'd a poor and pitiful reward,
And smell'd from head to foot—but not with Syrian nard.

XLIII.

The Monarch, then, well pleas'd that thus the mob
Had settl'd with prejudging voice the case,
Orders his trumpeter to blazon Rob,
Again the winner of the second race:
The fellow blew each cheek into a globe,
And puff'd into deformity his face,
As to the top of heav'n's empyreal frame
He, in a storm of breath, sent up the conqu'ror's name.

XLIV.

His name the rabble took; from tongue to tongue
Bandi'd it flew like fiery-winged shot,
That the blue atmosphere around them rung
With the blabb'd honours of great Robert Scott;
Nor when they thus his triumph stoutly sung,
Were the race-founder'd gentlemen forgot,
That in their trammels still a-flound'ring lay,
And, had they not been rais'd, had lain there to this day.

XLV.

But soon up-rear'd they were: the lads, that late
Had help'd their uncouth livery to don,
Now step upon the green compassionate,
To free them from the house of dole and moan:
The cords, that on their necks were knotted straight,
Are loos'd, and as they lie extended prone,
Of their long scabbards are discas'd the men,
And stand upon their feet, unclogg'd, and free agen.

XLVI.

They take no time (such shame the vanquish'd stung)
Each to snatch up his bag and bring it off;
Away they start, and plunge amid the throng,
Glad their embarrassment of cloth to doff
(So shoots the serpent to the brake along,
And leaves to rot his cast despised slough);
Deep in the throng with elbows sharp they bore,
And fear contemptuous laugh and hateful egg no more.

XLVII.

But now the sun, in mid-day's gorgeous state,
Tow'rs on the summit of the lucid sky,
And human stomachs that were cramm'd of late,
Now empty, send their silent dinner-cry,
Demanding something wherewithal to sate
Their hunger, bread and beer, or penny-pie:
The crowd, obedient to the belly's call,
Begin to munch and eat and nibble, one and all.

XLVIII.

Some from their pockets, or their wallets, drew
Lumps of the roasted flesh of calf or lamb;
Some ply their teeth-arm'd grinding jaws to chew
The tougher slices of the thirsty ham;
Others with bits of green cheese nice and new
Ev'n to the throat their clownish bellies cram,
While horns of ale, from many a barrel fill'd,
Foam white with frothy rage, and soon are swigg'd and swill'd.

XLIX.

James, too, and Mag, and all the courtly train
Of lords and ladies round them not a few,
With sugar'd biscuits sooth'd their stomachs' pain,
For courtly stomachs must be humour'd too;
And from their throats to wash the dusty stain
That they had breath'd when from the sacks it flew,
A glass of wine they slipp'd within their clay,
And if they swallow'd twain, the wiser folk were they.

L.

Nor ceas'd the business of the day meanwhile;
For as the Monarch chew'd his sav'ry cake,
The man whose lungs sustain the trumpet's toil,
Made haste again his noisy tube to take,
And with a cry, which, heard full many a mile,
Caus'd the young crows on Airdrie's trees to quake,
He bade the suitor-pipers to draw nigh,
That they might, round the knoll, their powers of piping try.

LI.

Which, when the rabble heard, with sudden sound
They broke their circle's huge circumference,
And, crushing forward to the southern mound,
They push'd their many-headed shoal immense,
Diffusing to an equal depth around
Their mass of bodies wedg'd compact and dense,
That, standing nigher, they might better hear
The pipers squeaking loud to charm Miss Maggie's ear.

LII.

And soon the pipers, shouldering along
Through the close mob their squeez'd uneasy way,
Stood at the hillock's foot, an eager throng,
Each asking licence from the King to play;
For with a tempest, turbulent and strong,
Labour'd their bags impatient of delay,
Heaving their bloated globes outrageously,
As if in pangs to give their contents to the sky.

LIII.

And every bag, thus full and tempest-ripe,
Beneath its arm lay ready to be prest,
And on the holes of each fair-polish'd pipe,
Each piper's fingers long and white were plac'd:
Fiercely they burn'd in jealous rivalship;
Each madding piper scoff'd at all the rest,
And fleer'd and toss'd contemptuously his head,
As if his skill alone deserv'd fair Maggie's bed.

LIV.

Nor could they wait, so piping mad they were,
Till James gave each man orders to begin;
But in a moment they displode their air
In one tumultuous and unlicens'd din;
Out-flies, in storm of simultaneous blare,
The whizzing wind comprest their bags within,
And whiffling through the wooden tubes so small,
Growls gladness to be freed from such confining thrall.

LV.

Then rose, in burst of hideous symphony,
Of pibrochs and of tunes one mingled roar;
Discordantly the pipes squeal'd sharp and high,
The drones alone in solemn concord snore;
Five hundred fingers, twinkling funnily,
Play twiddling up and down on hole and bore,
Now passage to the shrilly wind denying,
And now a little rais'd to let it out a-sighing.

LVI.

Then rung the rocks and caves of Billyness,
Reverberating back that concert's sound,
And half the lurking Echoes that possess
The glens and hollows of the Fifan ground;
Their shadowy voices strain'd into excess
Of out-cry, loud huzzaing round and round
To all the Dryads of Pitkirie wood,
That now they round their trees should dance in frisky mood.

LVII.

As when the sportsman with report of gun,
Alarms the sea-fowl of the Isle of May,
Ten thousand mews and gulls that shade the sun
Come flapping down in terrible dismay,
And with a wild and barb'rous concert stun
His ears, and scream, and shriek, and wheel away;
Scarce can the boatman hear his plashing oar;
Yell caves and eyries all, and rings each Maian shore.

LVIII.

Just so around the knoll did pipe and drone
Whistle and hum a discord strange to hear,
Tort'ring with violence of shriek and groan,
Kingly, and courtly, and plebeian ear;
And still the men had humm'd and whistl'd on,
Ev'n till each bag had burst its bloated sphere,
Had not the King, uprising, wav'd his hand,
And check'd the boist'rous din of such unmanner'd band.

LIX.

On one side of his face a laugh was seen,
On t'other side a half-form'd frown lay hid;
He frown'd, because they petulantly keen,
Set up their piping forward and unbid:
He laugh'd, for who could have control'd his mien,
Hearing such crash of pibrochs as he did?
He bade them orderly the strife begin,
And play each man the tune wherewith the fair he'd win.

LX.

Whereat the pipers ceased their idle toil
Of windy music wild and deafening,
And made too late (what they forgot e'erwhile)
A gen'ral bow to MAGGIE and their King;
But as they vail'd their bare heads tow'rd the soil,
Oh then there happ'd a strange portentous thing,
Which had not good my Muse confirm'd for true,
Myself had not believed, far less have told to you.

LXI.

For lo! whilst all their bodies yet were bent,
Breaks from the spotless blue of eastern sky
A globe of fire, (miraculous ostent!)
Bursten from some celestial cleft on high;
And thrice in circle round the firmament
Trail'd its long light the gleamy prodigy,
Till on the ring of pipers down it came,
And set their pipes, and drones, and chanters in a flame.

LXII.

'Twas quick and sudden as th' electric shock—
One moment lighted and consumed them all;
As is the green hair of the tufted oak
Scath'd into blackness by the fulmin'd ball;
Or, as spark-kindled, into fire and smoke,
Flashes and fumes the nitrous grain so small,
So were their bagpipes, in a twink, like tinder
Fired underneath their arms, and burn'd into a cinder.

LXIII.

Yet so innocuous was the sky-fall'n flame,
That, save their twangling instruments alone,
Unsinged their other gear remain'd the same,
Ev'n to the nap that stuck their coats upon;
Nor did they feel its heat, when down it came
On errand to destroy pipe, bag, and drone;
But stood in blank surprise, when to the ground
Dropt down in ashes black their furniture of sound.

LXIV.

Crest-fall'n they stood, confounded and distrest,
And fix'd upon the turf their stupid look,
Conscious that Heav'n forbade them to contest
By such a burning token of rebuke.
The rabble, too, its great alarm confest,
For every face the ruddy blood forsook,
As with their white, uprolling, ghastly eyes
They spied the streaky light wheel whizzing from the skies.

LXV.

And still they to that spot of orient heav'n,
Whence burst the shining globe, look up aghast,
Expecting, when th' empyreal pavement riv'n,
A second splendour to the earth should cast;
But when they saw no repetition giv'n,
Chang'd from alarm to noisy joy at last,
They set up such a mix'd tremendous shout,
As made the girdling heav'ns to bellow round about.

LXVI.

And such a crack and peal of laughter rose,
When the poor pipers bagpipe-less they saw,
As when a flock of jetty-feather'd crows,
On winter morning when the skies are raw,
Come from their woods in long and sooty rows,
And over ANSTER through their hoarse throats caw;
The sleepy old wives, on their warm chaff-beds,
Up from their bolsters rear, afear'd, their flannel'd heads.

LXVII.

Then did th' affronted pipers slink away,
With faces fix'd on earth for very shame;
For not one remnant of those pipes had they
Wherewith they late so arrogantly came;
But in a black and ashy ruin lay
Their glory moulder'd by the scathing flame;
Yet in their hearts they cursed (and what the wonder?)
That fire to which their pipes so quick were giv'n a plunder.

LXVIII.

And scarce they off had slunk, when with a bound
Great ROBERT SCOTT sprang forth before the King;
For he alone, when all the pipers round
Stood rang'd into their fire-devoted ring,
Had kept snug distance from the fated ground,
As if forewarn'd of that portentous thing;
He stood and laugh'd, as underneath his arm
He held his bagpipe safe, unscath'd with fiery harm.

LXIX.

His hollow drone, with mouth wide-gaping, lay
Over his shoulder pointing to the sky,
Ready to spue its breath, and puff away
The lazy silver clouds that sit on high:
His bag swell'd madly to begin the play,
And with its bowel-wind groan'd inwardly;
Not higher heav'd the wind-bags, which of yore
Ulysses got from him who ruled th' Æolian shore.

LXX.

He thus the King with reverence bespoke:
"My liege, since heav'n with bagpipe-levell'd fire
Hath turn'd my brethren's gear to dust and smoke,
And testified too glaringly its ire,
It fits me now, as yet my bagpipe's poke
Remains unsinged, and every pipe entire,
To play my tune—Oh King, with your good will—
And to the royal ear to prove my piping skill."

LXXI.

Nodded his liege assent, and straightway bade
Him stand a-top o' th' hillock at his side;
A-top he stood; and first a bow he made
To all the crowd that shouted far and wide;
Then, like a piper dext'rous at his trade,
His pipes to play adjusted and applied;
Each finger rested on its proper bore;
His arm appear'd half-raised to wake the bag's uproar.

LXXII.

A space he silent stood, and cast his eye
In meditation upwards to the pole,
As if he pray'd some fairy pow'r in sky
To guide his fingers right o'er bore and hole;
Then pressing down his arm, he gracefully
Awak'd the merry bagpipe's slumb'ring soul,
And pip'd and blew, and play'd so sweet a tune,
As might have well unspher'd the reeling midnight moon.

LXXIII.

His ev'ry finger, to its place assign'd,
Mov'd quiv'ring like the leaf of aspen tree,
Now shutting up the skittish squeaking wind,
Now op'ning to the music passage free;
His cheeks, with windy puffs therein confin'd,
Were swoln into a red rotundity,
As from his lungs into the bag was blown
Supply of needful air to feed the growling drone.

LXXIV.

And such a potent tune did never greet
The drum of human ear with lively strain;
So merry, that from dancing on his feet
No man undeaf could stockishly refrain;
So loud, 'twas heard a dozen miles complete,
Making old Echo pipe and hum again,
So sweet, that all the birds in air that fly,
Charm'd into new delight, come sailing through the sky.

LXXV.

Crow, sparrow, linnet, hawk, and white-wing'd dove,
Wheel in aërial jig o'er Anster Loan;
The sea-mews from each Maian cleft and cove
O'er the deep sea come pinion-wafted on;
The light-detesting bats now flap above,
Scaring the sun with wings to day unknown—
Round Robert's head they dance, they cry, they sing,
And shear the subtil sky with broad and playful wing.

LXXVI.

And eke the mermaids that in ocean swim,
Drawn by that music from their shelly caves,
Peep now unbashful from the salt-sea brim,
And flounce and plash exulting in the waves;
They spread at large the white and floating limb,
That Neptune amorously clips and laves,
And kem with combs of pearl and coral fair
Their long sleek oozy locks of green redundant hair.

LXXVII.

Nor was its influence less on human ear;
First from their gilded chairs up-start at once
The royal James and Maggie seated near,
Enthusiastic both and mad to dance:
Her hand he snatch'd, and look'd a merry leer,
Then caper'd high in wild extravagance,
And on the grassy summit of the knoll,
Wagg'd each monarchial leg in galliard strange and droll.

LXXVIII.

As when a sun-beam, from the waving face
Of well-fill'd waterpail reflected bright,
Varies upon the chamber-walls its place,
And, quiv'ring, tries to cheat and foil the sight;
So quick did Maggie, with a nimble grace,
Skip patt'ring to and fro, alert and light,
And, with her noble colleague in the reel,
Haughtily heav'd her arms, and shook the glancing heel.

LXXIX.

The Lords and Ladies next, who sat or stood
Near to the Piper and the King around,
Smitten with that contagious dancing mood,
'Gan hand in hand in high lavolt to bound,
And jigg'd it on as featly as they could,
Circling in sheeny rows the rising ground,
Each sworded Lord a Lady's soft palm griping,
And to his mettle rous'd at such unwonted piping.

LXXX.

Then did th' infectious hopping-mania seize
The circles of the crowd that stood more near,
Till, round and round, far spreading by degrees,
It madden'd all the Loan to kick and rear;
Men, women, children, lilt and ramp, and squeeze,
Such fascination takes the gen'ral ear!
Ev'n babes that at their mothers' bosoms hung,
Their little willing limbs fantastically flung!

LXXXI.

And hoar-hair'd men and wives, whose marrow age
Hath from their hollow bones suck'd out and drunk,
Canary in unconscionable rage,
Nor feel their sinews wither'd now and shrunk;
Pellmell in random couples they engage,
And boisterously wag feet, arms, and trunk,
As if they strove, in capering so brisk,
To heave their aged knees up to the solar disk.

LXXXII.

And cripples from beneath their shoulders fling
Their despicable crutches far away,
Then, yok'd with those of stouter limbs, up-spring
In hobbling merriment, uncouthly gay;
And some on one leg stand y-gamboling;
For why? The other short and frail had they;
Some, whose both legs distorted were and weak,
Dance on their poor knee-pans in mad preposterous freak.

LXXXIII.

So on they trip, King, Maggie, Knight, and Earl,
Green-coated courtier, satin-snooded dame,
Old men and maidens, man, wife, boy, and girl,
The stiff, the supple, bandy-legg'd, and lame—
All suck'd and wrapt into the dance's whirl,
Inevitably witch'd within the same;
Whilst Roe, far-seen, o'erlooks the huddling Loan,
Rejoicing in his pipes, and squeals serenely on.

LXXXIV.

But such a whirling and a din there was,
Of bodies and of feet that heel'd the ground,
As when the Maelstrom in his craggy jaws
Engluts the Norway waves with hideous sound;
In vain the black sea-monster plies his paws
'Gainst the strong eddy that impels him round;
Rack'd and convuls'd, the ingorging surges roar,
And fret their frothy wrath, and reel from shore to shore.

LXXXV.

So reel the mob, and with their feet up-cast
From the tramp'd soil a dry and dusty cloud,
That shades the huddling hurly-burly vast
From the warm sun as with an earthy shroud;
Else, had the warm sun spied them wriggling fast,
He sure had laugh'd at such bewitched crowd,
For never, since heav'n's baldric first he trod,
Tripp'd was such country dance beneath his fiery road.

LXXXVI.

Then was the shepherd, that on Largo-law
Sat idly whistling to his feeding flock,
Dismay'd, when looking south-eastward he saw
The dusty cloud more black than furnace-smoke;
He lean'd his ear, and catch'd with trembling awe
The dance's sound that th'ambient ether broke;
He bless'd himself and cried, "By sweet St John!
The devil hath got a job in Anster's dirty Loan."

LXXXVII.

At length the mighty Piper, honest Rob,
His wonder-working melody gave o'er,
When on a sudden all the flouncing mob
Their high commotion ceas'd and toss'd no more;
Trunk, arm, and leg, forgot to shake and bob,
That bobb'd and shak'd so parlously before;
On ground, fatigu'd, the panting dancers fall,
Wond'ring what witch's craft had thus embroil'd them all.

LXXXVIII.

And some cried out, that o'er the Piper's head
They had observ'd a little female fay,
Clad in green gown, and purple-striped plaid,
That fed his wind-bag, aidant of the play;
Some, impotent to speak, and almost dead
With jumping, as on earth they sat or lay,
Wip'd from their brows, with napkin, plaid, or gown,
The globes of shining sweat that ooze and trickle down.

LXXXIX.

Nor less with jig o'er-labour'd and o'er-wrought,
Down on their chairs dropt Maggie and the King,
Amaz'd what supernat'ral spell had caught
And forc'd their heels into such frolicking;
And much was Mag astonish'd, when she thought
(As sure it was an odd perplexing thing)
That Robert's tune was to her ear the same
As what Tom Puck late play'd, when from her pot he came.

XC.

But from that hour, the Monarch and the mob
Gave Maggie Lauder's name to Robert's tune,
And so shall it be call'd, while o'er the globe
Travels the waning and the crescent moon,
And from that hour the puissant Piper Rob,
Whose bagpipe wak'd so hot a rigadoon,
From his well-manag'd bag, and drone, and chanter,
Obtain'd the glorious name of Mighty Rob the Ranter.

CANTO V.

I.

Oh for that pond'rous broomstick, whereon rode
Grim Beattie Laing,* hors'd daringly sublime!
So would I fly above the solar road,
To where the Muses sit on high and chime;

* The famous witch of Pittenweem. See *Satan's Invisible World Discovered.*

Eigh! I would kiss them in their bright abode,
And from their lips suck Poetry and Rhyme;
Till Jove (if such my boldness should displease him)
Cry, "Fy, thou naughty boy! pack off and mount thy besom."

II.

It needed not that with a third exclaim,
King JAMES's trumpeter aloud should cry
Through his long alchemy, the famous name
Of him who, piping, got the victory;
For, sooth to tell, man, boy, and girl, and dame,
Him the great Prince of Pipers testify,
Not with huzzas and jabbering of tongues,
But with hard puffing breasts and dance-o'erwearied lungs.

III.

And truly had the crier will'd to shout
The doughty Piper's name through polish'd trump,
His breath had not suffic'd to twang it out,
So did the poor man's lights puff, pant, and jump:
Wherefore to rest them from that dancing-bout,
A while they sat or lay on back or rump,
Gulping with open mouths and nostrils wide
The pure refreshing waves of Jove's aërial tide.

IV.

But, unfatigued, upon the hillock's crown
Stood ROB, as if his lungs had spent no breath,
And looked with conscious exultation down
Upon the dance's havoc wide beneath,
Laughing to see th' encumber'd plain bestrown
With people whirl'd and wriggled nigh to death;
Erelong he thus addrest, with reverend air,
The King that, breathless yet, sat puffing in his chair:

V.

"My Liege! though well I now with triple claim
The guerdon of my threefold toils may ask,
As independent of success i'the game
Of jingling words, the ballad-maker's task;
Yet, as I too with honourable aim
Have tapp'd Apollo's rhyme-o'erflowing cask,
Allow me, good my King! to ope my budget,
And tell my witty tale, that you and MAG may judge it."

VI.

Whereto his breathless King made slow reply
(He drew a gulp of air each word between)—
"Great—Piper!—Mighty—ROB!—Belov'd—of sky!
Oh prov'd—too well thy—piping craft—has been;
Witness my lungs—that play so puff—ingly,
And witness yonder—laughter-moving scene!
I'm pinch'd for wind—Ha, ha!—scarce breath I draw—
Pardi!—a sight like yon my Kingship never saw!

VII.

Woes me! how sweating in prostration vast,
Men, wives, boys, maidens, lie in dust bestrown,
Gaping for respiration, gasping fast,
Half my liege subjects wreck'd on ANSTER Loan!
'Twill need, methinks, a hideous trumpet-blast,
To rouse them from thus grov'lling basely prone;
For such effort my man's lungs yet are frail;
So, ROB, take thou his trump and rouse them for thy tale."

VIII.

He spake, and at the hint, the Ranter took
The throated metal from the Herald's hand,
And blew a rousing clangour, wherewith shook
Green sea, and azure sky, and cloddy land:
Up-sprung, as from a trance, with startl'd look,
The prostrate people, and erected stand,
Turning their faces to the knap of ground,
Whence burst upon their ears the loud assaulting sound.

IX.

Then, crowding nearer in a vasty shoal,
They press their sum of carcasses more close,
Till crush'd, and cramm'd, and straiten'd round the knoll,
They rear and poise their bodies on their toes:
So were they pack'd and mortis'd, that the whole
Seem'd but one lump incorp'rate to compose;
One mass of human trunks unmov'd they show,
Topp'd with ten thousand heads all moving to and fro.

X.

And from the tongues of all those heads there rose
A confus'd murmur through the multitude,
As when the merry gale of summer blows
Upon the tall tops of a stately wood,
And rocks the long consociated boughs,
Rustling amid the leaves a discord rude;
High perch'd aloft the cuckoo rides unseen,
Embower'd with plenteous shades, and tufts of nodding green.

XI.

Then wav'd the RANTER round and round his hand,
Commanding them to still their hubbub loud:
All in a moment, still and noiseless, stand
The widely-circumfus'd and heaving crowd,
As if upon their gums at ROB's command
Were pinn'd those tongues that jabber'd late so proud;
Tow'rds him, as to their centre, every ear
Inclines its mazy hole, th'expected tale to hear.

XII.

But when the RANTER from his height beheld
The silent world of heads diffus'd below,
With all their ears agape, his visage swell'd,
And burn'd with honest laughter's ruddy glow;
For who had not from gravity rebell'd,
Girt with infinitude of noddles so?
He soon into composure starch'd his phiz,
And op'd his fluent mouth, and told his tale, which is—

XIII.

"Where Thirdpart-house upon the level plain
Rears up its sooty chimnies high in air,
There liv'd of old, in ALEXANDER's reign,
Miss SUSAN SCOTT, a lady young and fair,
Who sith that death her parents both had ta'en,
Sole child, their coffers and their fields did heir—
Their fields, that waved with Ceres' green array,
Their coffers, gorged with gold, where Mammon prison'd lay.

XIV.

Her form was beauteous as the budding spring,
Shaped by the mother of almighty love;
Her soul was but a sorry paltry thing,
As e'er was quicken'd by the breath of Jove:
Her person might have pleased a crowned King,
Or shone a Dryad in her Thirdpart grove;
Her soul, her silly soul, alas, to tell!
Was as a rotten egg enclosed in golden shell.

XV.

All day she, sitting at her window, cast
O'er her estate a proud and greedy eye;
Now measuring her fields, how broad, how vast,
How valuably rich they sunning lie;
Now summing up the bolls that in the blast
Wave yet unshorn, obnoxious to the sky,
And counting, avariciously, what more
Of gold th' unsickl'd crop would add unto her store.

XVI.

But when the grim and hooded night let fall
O'er Thirdpart's smoky roofs her ugly shade,
She hasten'd from her candle-lighten'd hall
To where her darling coffer'd god was laid,
And freeing him with key from box's thrall,
On floor the gaudy deity display'd,
And with a miser's fumbling palm'd each toy,
And kiss'd bare Mammon's limbs, and laugh'd in silly joy.

XVII.

With her resided that fam'd wizard old,
Her uncle and her guardian, MICHAEL SCOTT,
Who there, in Satan's arts malignly bold,
His books of dev'lish efficacy wrote;
And, lackied round (tremendous to be told!)
With demons hung with tails like shaggy goat,
Employ'd their ministrations damn'd to ring
Madrid's resounding bells, and fright the Spanish King

XVIII.

Fit guardian he for such a peevish ward:
He check'd not her perversity of soul,
But, hell's pernicious logic studying hard,
Gave up the lady to her own control:
Thus fost'ring, by his foolish disregard,
The cank'ring vice that o'er her spirit stole:
Captious and proud she was, and fond of strife—
The pertest, prettiest jade of all the girls of Fife.

XIX.

Yet not the less her beauty's wafted fame
A mob of suitors to her mansion drew;
Her face had charms to lure them and inflame,
Her dow'r had mickle fascination too:
On cap'ring steeds from all the county came
Fife's sparkish lairds, all resolute to woo,
And win, with courtship's sly assiduous art,
Fair SUSAN's worthy dow'r, and pettish worthless heart.

XX.

So num'rous were her lovers, that, in troth,
I scarce by name can reckon up them all;
ARDROSS and LARGO, gallant fellows both,
PITCORTHIE, and RANKEILOR, and NEWHALL,
And NEWARK, with his coat of scarlet cloth,
And short STRAVITHY, and RATHILLET tall,
And proud BALCOMIE with his tassel'd hat,
And GIBLISTON the lean, and SAUCHOP round and fat.

XXI.

All these, and many more love-pining men,
She flouted from her chamber scornfully;
To one alone she us'd not such disdain,
The goodly CHARLY MELVIL of Carnbee;
For he, the singly cunning of the train,
Enforc'd with costly gifts his am'rous plea,
And brib'd her dull affections icy-cold,
With jewell'd gairish rings, and knacks of labour'd gold.

XXII.

For ev'ry time he snatch'd her downy fist,
With its soft warmth to paddle and to play,
He hung a bracelet on her iv'ry wrist,
A golden bracelet like a sunbeam gay;
And when her lip he rapturously kist
(A kiss she ne'er refus'd for such a pay),
He dropt upon her white neck from his hand
A tangl'd chain of gold, worth many a rood of land.

XXIII.

Till of his trinkets so profuse he grew,
That soon exhausted was his purse's store,
And half his lands were in a month or two
Mortgaged for money to procure her more;
Yet ne'er could he prevail on froward SUE,
Though ne'er he ceas'd t'importune and implore,
T' appoint the long-retarded marriage-day,
And cure his love, and give her promised hand away.

XXIV.

One summer eve, as in delightful walk,
Handed, they past down Thirdpart's avenue,
And, in a lightsome interchange of talk,
Whined out their loves, as lovers use to do,
Whilst ev'ry hairy bush upon its stalk
Nodded for joy around them where it grew,
CHARLES took advantage of the lovely hour,
Again t' impress his suit with tongue's glib wordy power.

XXV.

'Oh my sweet SUSAN! sweet my SUSAN oh!'—
(Here beat the poor laird his afflicted breast)—
'Cast round thine eye, that eye that witches so,
On God's wide world in beauty's garment drest,
On yonder many-listed clouds that glow
Heav'n's tap'stry curtaining the blazing west,
On yonder setting rays up-shot on high,
Like tiny wires of gold aslant the gorgeous sky.

XXVI.

Look how the bushy top of ev'ry tree
Is mantled o'er with evening's borrow'd sheen,
And seems to wag and wave more boastfully
To the sweet breeze its leafy wig of green;
Each herb, and flower, and whin, and bush, we see,
Laughs jocund in creation's richest scene,
Whilst earth reflects on heav'n, and heav'n on earth,
Of God's created things the beauty and the mirth:

XXVII.

All these are passing lovely to the view,
But lovelier, tenfold lovelier, are to me,
Thy form and countenance, my bonny SUE!
Creation's beauties all are summ'd in thee;
Thine eye out-lustres heav'n's most lucid blue;
Thy cheek out-blooms earth's bloomiest flower and tree;
And evening's gaudy clouds, that paint the air,
Are fripp'ry to the locks of thy long golden hair!

XXVIII.

Then hey! my sweeting, when shall come the day
Ordain'd to give me such transcendant charms?
Still must I pine and fret at thy delay,
Capriciously forbidden from thy arms,
And, like a pair of bellows, puff away
My sighs, and swelter in hot Cupid's harms?—
For heav'n's sake, SUSAN, on my case have pity,
And fix our wedding-day, my chick, my dear, my pretty!'

XXIX.

This said, he, gazing on her saucy eye,
Forestalls the angry answer of her tongue;
When hark! a sound of rushing, wildly high,
Is heard the trees adjoining from among,
As if a whirlwind, bursting from the sky,
Their tops on one another sore had swung;
And lo! out-springs in maddest pitch of wrath,
PITCORTHIE's biggest bull upon their peaceful path.

XXX.

'Fly, fly, my love!' the gen'rous MELVIL said,
And interpos'd to meet the monster's shock;
For fiercely rush'd he on th' endanger'd maid,
Mad at the glaring of her scarlet frock:
'Fly, fly, my love!'—she turn'd about and fled,
With face through terror pale and white as smoke,
And left her laird, at danger of his skull,
To wrestle for his life, and parry with the bull.

XXXI.

The bull's long horns he grip'd, and tow'rd the ground
Press'd down with might his hugy head robust,
Whilst, madder thus defrauded of his wound,
The brawny brute his bulk still forward thrust,
And, riving with his heels the soil around,
Bespatter'd heav'n with turf, and sod, and dust,
And bellow'd till each tree around him shook,
And Echo bellow'd back from her aërial nook.

XXXII.

At last th'intrepid lover, guessing well
That now far off from harm his SUE was sped,
Ungrip'd the horns, that, white and terrible,
From brow their long and curling menace spread;
But scarce his grasp was loos'd, when (sad to tell!)
Th'advantag'd brute toss'd churlishly his head,
And with one horn, that suddenly uprose,
Demolish'd and tore off the gallant MELVIL's nose.

XXXIII.

Clean by the roots uptorn was MELVIL's nose,
Leaving its place deform and foul with blood;
Yet stood he not to reap some heavier blows,
And catch in napkin the red rushing flood;
But quite regardless of his face's woes,
He, hurrying down the alley of the wood,
Fled as if life were hung upon his heels;
Nor in his sweaty haste his nose's torment feels.

XXXIV.

Thus by the mettle of his heels he bore
His life in safety from the brute away,
And left behind his wound's unsightly gore,
To all the wild-cats of the grove a prey:
Homeward, in dumpish mood, afflicted sore,
He took with lamentation loud his way,
Wailing his piteous bitterness of case,
His nasal honours crush'd, and ghastly havock'd face.

XXXV.

Six weeks he kept his mansion at Carnbee,
Waiting his nose's re-establishment,
In vain; repair'd, alas! it could not be,
Too sore that horn the cartilage had shent.
Fife's surgeons crowding came, for love of fee,
With plasters and with saws of loathsome scent,
In vain; what could or saw or surgeon do?
Gone was the good old nose, and who could rear a new?

XXXVI.

Meanwhile he ceas'd not, twice a week, to send
Sweet cards to her, who did his thoughts employ,
Memorials dear, which as he sat and penn'd,
Perch'd laughing on his quill Love's mighty boy,
And on the paper from its inky end
Distill'd delight, and tenderness, and joy;
His cards he sent, but (oh, the sin and shame!)
From wicked shameless Sue there ne'er an answer came.

XXXVII.

Nor could her cruel silence be explain'd,
Till Fame blew up the tidings to his house,
That she, for whom his nose was marr'd and pain'd,
To whom so long he had addrest his vows,
Had, for another, now his love disdain'd,
Urg'd by her uncle Newark to espouse;
That publish'd were their bans, that now was fixt
The wedding to be held on Monday forenoon next.

XXXVIII.

Then was the heart of injur'd Melvil rent
With bitter passion at a slight so base;
That moment up he started, with intent
To go and chide th'apostate to her face:
Forth from his house in surly chafe he went,
Apparell'd in his coat of golden lace;
And eastward took his way alone and sad,
Half cursing, in his heart, a maid so base and bad.

XXXIX.

But when the little boys and girls survey'd
His lack-nose visage as he travell'd by,
Some to their mothers' houses ran, afraid
To tell them what a face had met their eye;
Some with their fingers pointed undismay'd
Giggling and blythe at his deformity;
Ev'n ploughmen, at the road-edge, paus'd from toil,
And held their sturdy sides, and loudly laugh'd a while.

XL.

Yet onward held the hapless laird his gait,
Regardless of their mockery and scorn;
His sole vexation was the girl ingrate,
In whose defence his beauty had been shorn.
He soon attain'd the ample hall, where sate,
In morning dishabille, the fair forsworn;
And, ent'ring boldly in his angry mood,
With grimly-flatten'd face before her frowning stood.

XLI.

'Fy, horror! who art thou,' she scoffing said,
'That with defeature horrible to see,
Dar'st thus into my room advance thy stride,
To fright my lapdog, and to sicken me?
Go, hie thee homeward, thou deform, and hide
That aspect in the dingles of Carnbee;
There with thy rabbits burrow thee, till sprout
Forth from between thy cheeks a beautifying snout.'

XLII.

This said, th'insulting creature from her chair,
Red with resentment, on a sudden springs,
And bolting forward with a saucy air,
Her shapely person from the chamber flings,
Leaving her honest laird confounded there,
Heart-anguish'd by vexation's sharpest stings,
That he may vent his anger and his fume
On the fair carved chairs that decorate her room.

XLIII.

He got no long time to displode and vent
On the fair chairs his bosom-choking ire;
For, from his closet by Miss Susan sent,
Sir Michael rush'd, the sorcerer stout and dire,
With staff in hand, to rattle chastisement
Upon the ribs and backbone of the squire:
He beat him from the house with magic stick,
And added surly words, and rude discourteous kick.

XLIV.

Poor Melvil! griev'd, and mortified, and dampt,
His back he turn'd upon th'uncivil door,
And, musing vengeance, down the alley trampt,
As boil'd his heart with indignation o'er;
He bit his lip, and curs'd the soil, and stampt,
Chafing his wrath with imprecation more;
For what man, so misus'd, could have forborne
To ban Sir Michael Scott, and Sue the fair forsworn?

XLV.

So down the avenue he banning past,
Scarce conscious whither in his fret he went,
Till twilight tenanted the sky at last,
Pavilioning o'er earth her sable tent,
And the round moon, up-wheeling from the vast
Of sea, in pomp of clouds magnificent,
Embellish'd, with her sober silvery shine,
The leaves and barky trunks of Thirdpart's fir and pine.

XLVI.

'Alas! was e'er like me poor lover crost?'
(He thus aloud deplored his wretched case)
'So fool'd, abus'd, and cocker'd to my cost,
So beaten into sorrow and disgrace!
Was't not enough that for the jade I lost
The rising honours of my ruin'd face;
But, like a hedge-born beggar tattars-hung,
Thus from her hated gate I must be switch'd and flung?

XLVII.

May vengeance seize thee, thou foul wizard churl,
For basting me at such an irksome rate!
May Satan gripe thee by thy heel, and hurl
Thy carcass whizzing through hell's hottest gate!
And as for thee, thou proud ingrateful girl,
Whose baseness, to my grief, I know too late,
May some good pow'r, the injur'd lover's friend,
On thy perfidious head a wing'd requital send!'

XLVIII.

His pray'r he thus ejaculating spake,
Nor knew that some good pow'r was nigh to hear;
For in the middle of a flow'ry brake,
That white with moonshine spread its thicket near,
Lay Tommy Puck, the gentle fay, awake,
And Mrs Puck, his gentle lady dear,
Basking and lolling in the lunar ray,
And tumbling up and down in brisk fantastic play.

XLIX.

Quoth frisky Tommy to his elfin wife,
'Didst thou not hear the gentleman, my chuck?
'Tis young Carnbee, the sweetest laird of Fife,
Whom sour Sir Michael with his cane has struck.
What think ye? By Titania's precious life!
Fits it not now the tender-hearted Puck
T'assist an injur'd lover, and to plot
A scheme of nice revenge on Sue and Michael Scott?'

L.

'O yes, my dear!' his fairy consort said,
'Go forth, and to the man address thy talk:'
This heard, he from his bushy arbour's shade
Flung out his minim stature on the walk,
And stood in dwarfish finery array'd,
Gaudy as summer-bean's bloom-cover'd stalk;
He doff'd his hat, and made a bow profound,
And thus bespoke the laird in words of pleasing sound:

LI.

'Marvel not, Melvil, that before thy feet
I plant me thus in fearless attitude;
For I have heard, within my close retreat,
What thou hast utter'd in thy fretful mood;
And well I know thy truth how with deceit
Repaid, thy faith with base ingratitude:
Good soul! I pity thee with all my heart,
And therefore from my bush to thy assistance start.

LII.

For much it grieves Tom Puck's too feeling breast,
That one so good, so liberal and true,
Should thus become a laughter and a jest,
Mock'd, jilted, beaten into black and blue:
I like to help whom malice has opprest,
And prompt a lover generous as you;
So with attention list what I propose,
To baffle and avenge, and laugh to scorn your foes.

LIII.

On Monday next, th'appointed wedding-day,
For perjur'd SUE her NEWARK to espouse,
When her long hall with feasting shall be gay,
And smoke with meats, with riot, and with bouse,
From thy paternal mansion haste away,
At height of noon, to Thirdpart's bustling house,
That thou, by time of dinner, may be there,
Prepar'd to climb the steps of her detested stair.

LIV.

And when th'exulting bridegroom and his bride,
Surrounded with their festive spousal train,
Are seated at their tables long and wide,
Wielding their noisy forks and knives amain,
Then burst into the hall with dauntless stride,
Through menials, greasy cooks, and serving-men,
Nor speak a word though in thy way they stand,
But dash the scroyls aside with swing of boist'rous hand.

LV.

Surprise, be sure, shall seize the feasters all
At such a bold intruder on their treat;
Their forks, half-lifted to their mouths, shall fall
Down on their plates, unlighten'd of their meat;
Yet speak not still, but casting round the hall
An eye whose every glance is fire and threat,
Thou in a corner of the room shalt see
Sir MICHAEL's magic staff, the same that basted thee.

LVI.

Snatch up that magic energetic stick,
And, in thy clench'd hand wielding it with might,
On MICHAEL's white bald pate discharge thou quick
A pelt enough to stun the wizard wight:
Strange consequence shall follow from that lick;
Yet be not thou amaz'd or struck with fright,
But springing to the table's upper end,
Let on his niece's nose an easier pat descend.

LVII.

I will not now unfold what odd event
From either stroke will suddenly ensue;
Enough to know, that plenteous punishment
Shall light on grim Sir MICHAEL and on SUE:
Go—by your nose's cure, be confident
That Tommy Puck aright thus counsels you.'—
This said, he, from a vial silver-bright,
Pour'd out upon his palm a powder small and white;

LVIII.

And to his mouth up-lifting it, he blows
The magic dust on MELVIL's blemish'd face,
When (such its power) behold another nose
Sprouts out upon the scarr'd and skinless place,
And to th'astonish'd moon, fair-jutting, shows,
Its supplemental elegance and grace:
Which done, he, shining like a bright glow-worm,
Plung'd deep amid the brake his puny pretty form.

LIX.

Amaze had taken MELVIL, when appear'd
Erect before his steps the pigmy fay;
Yet not with less attention had he heard
What courteous Tommy did so kindly say:
That heart, late vex'd and tortur'd, now was cheer'd,
And merrily beat in Hope's delightful play:
Homeward he jogg'd from Thirdpart's haunted shade
Proud of his novel nose, and Tommy's tender'd aid.

LX.

Arriv'd the day when saucy SUE should wed
Young NEWARK, vap'ring in his scarlet coat;
From his paternal mansion MELVIL sped
To Thirdpart house, t'achieve his ready plot.
'Twas dinner-time; the tables all were spread
With luscious sirloins reeking richly hot,
Gravies and pies, and steaming soups of hare,
And roasted hen and goose, and titbits nice and rare.

LXI.

SUE at the table's place of honour sat,
Dealing the warm broth from its vessel out;
Whilst, slashing with his knife through lean and fat,
Carv'd at the lower end Sir MICHAEL stout:
'Twas nought but mirth, and junketing, and chat,
And handing wings and legs of fowl about,
And noise of silver spoons, and clank and clatter
Of busy forks and knives, of porringer and platter.

LXII.

Squire MELVIL heard without the dinner's din:
Nor tarried; but with brisk and boist'rous bound,
Jump'd up the stairs, and rudely rushing in,
Dash'd down whom standing in his way he found;
Menials and apron'd cooks of greasy chin,
Fist-founder'd, went a-rapping to the ground,
With all their loads of sauces, meats, and plates,
In ruin fat and rich hurl'd on their pitiful pates.

LXIII.

Astonish'd were the feasters when they view'd
Such bold intruder stand before their eyes;
The morsels in their mouths that lay half-chew'd,
Could not be swallow'd through their great surprise;
Their half-rais'd forks, bestuck with gobbets good,
Dropt, as if impotent more high to rise;
Each on his neighbour cast a meaning stare,
As if he dumbly ask'd, What does Squire MELVIL there?

LXIV.

'Twas for a moment silent in the hall,
As if pale Death, the chapless and the grim,
Had taken by the throat, and choak'd them all,
With his long, fleshless, scraggy, fingers slim;
Till, throwing round his glance from wall to wall,
The Squire discern'd the staff with tassel trim—
Sir MICHAEL's staff with head of silver white,
Wherewith he was enjoin'd its owner's poll to smite.

LXV.

He flew, he grasp'd it by its silver rind,
And to the ceiling swinging it on high,
Brought down on MICHAEL's pate, as quick as wind,
A pelt that whizz'd and rattl'd horribly;
Sounded his bald skull with the stroke unkind,
Re-echoing in each lore-fill'd cavity,
When, oh the wonder! on his high arm-chair,
Chang'd was the churlish knight that instant to a hare!

LXVI.

His dainty head with learning so replete,
Collaps'd, grew round, and little, and long-ear'd;
His arms, that yet were stretch'd to carve the meat,
Quite shrunken into two fore-legs appear'd;
His brawny thighs turn'd hind-legs on his seat
Whereon his metamorphos'd form was rear'd;
And, to complete the quadruped, out-sprouted
A short tail from his rump with plenteous hair about it.

LXVII.

He sat not long, so transmew'd, on his chair,
But, lighting on the carpet-cover'd floor,
Scudded as swift as lightning down the stair,
On his four bestial legs, to gain the door:
'Hollo!' cried boy and groom, 'A hare! a hare!'
As flew he from the house their eyes before:
'Hollo! let loose on puss the fleet grey-hound!'
Was bawl'd in Thirdpart's court from one to t'other round.

LXVIII.

Unkennel'd in a twink was fleet grey-hound,
And after puss commenc'd the keen pursuit;
O'er plough'd, o'er sown, o'er green, o'er fallow ground,
With lev'ret craft, and wile of weary foot,
With skip and scud and ditch-o'erleaping bound,
The wizard ran in guise of hairy brute,
While snuffing out with sapient nose his track,
Came yelling at his heels all Thirdpart's clam'rous pack.

LXIX.

Eastward they scour'd, out-scampering the gale,
Long-winded dog and pursy panting hare,
Till, taking refuge in the streets of Crail,
Sir MICHAEL plung'd him in a jaw-hole there,
And left, without, his foes with wagging tail
Worrying the sky with bark of loud despair,
As he, secure, was fain to slink and cuddle
Encav'd beneath the street within his miry puddle.

LXX.

There let us leave the knight to cuddle fain,
And long-tongued dog to volley out his yell,
And turn we to the banquet-hall again,
Where MICHAEL'S metamorphosis befell:
No sooner saw the squire that not in vain
The staff had lighted, but succeeded well,
Than, bounding up to where jilt SUSAN sat,
On her fair nose's bridge he brought a gentle pat.

LXXI.

A second miracle ensues; for lo!
That nose, her countenance's pride and grace,
Grows out, and shoots, and lengthens at the blow,
Ridiculously sprouting from her face,
And aye it swells and beetles moe and moe,
Tap'ring to such a length its queer disgrace,
That dips its point at last amid the broth,
That near her lies in dish upon the table-cloth.

LXXII.

Nor did her aspect only suffer shame;
For, in proportion as extends her nose,
Her shoulders, late so beautiful of frame,
Into a hump up-heaving, hugely rose,
Most mountainous and high, as ill became
Fair bride array'd in sumptuous wedding clothes;
Her very gown was burst and riven through
With the large fleshy swell, so strangely big it grew!

LXXIII.

Then shook the room with laughter's frequent crack,
As saw the guests each droll excrescence rise;
One pointed to her still up-heaving back,
One to her nose's still-enlarging size;
'Ha! ha!' from every squire's throat loudly brake,
'Te-hee!' each lady chuckles and replies;
'Heav'ns, what a hideous nose!' cried every dame;
'Heav'ns, what a hideous hump!' did every laird exclaim.*

LXXIV.

Such was the punishment which silly SUE
From her resentful much-wrong'd lover bore;
And so was sour Sir MICHAEL punish'd too,
For caneing honest MELVIL from her door:
Wherefore, as now the work of vengeance due
Was finish'd, CHARLIE left her chamber-floor,
And turn'd his face, rejoicing, towards home,
Mutt'ring his grateful thanks to little elfin Tom."

CANTO VI.

I.

OH that my noddle were a seething kettle,
Frothing with bombast o'er the Muses' fire!
Oh that my wit were sharper than a nettle!
Oh that with shrill swan-guts were strung my lyre!
So would I rant and sing with such a mettle,
That each old wife in Fife's full-peopled shire
Should Maenad-like, spring from her spinning wheel,
And frolic round her bard, and wince a tott'ring reel.

II.

Scarce had the victor ceas'd his hindmost clause,
When from th'immensity of folk afar,
Rose such a hideous shout of loud applause,
As ever stunn'd with outcry sun or star;
Each tongue grew riotous within its jaws,
Clacking an acclamation popular;
Hands, high o'erhead uplifted, round and round,
Struck plausive palm on palm, and clapt a rattling sound.

* Wieland gives to one of his fairy tales a catastrophe somewhat similar, if I recollect right, to the above.

III.

And twice ten thousand hats, aloft upthrown
In black ascension, blot heav'n's blue serene,
O'ercanopying ANSTER'S crowded Loan
With crown and rim, as with a dusky screen;
And bonnets broad, and caps of sharp'ning cone,
Afloat 'twixt earth and firmament are seen,
And lasses' cowls, and hoods, uptost on high,
Encroach with tawdry clout upon the clouds of sky.

IV.

As when a troop of locusts, famine-pin'd,
From Edom's unblest monster-breeding womb,
Sail on the hot wings of the southern wind,
Wriggling aloft their sky-hung mass of gloom;
And where El Sham's clear golden riv'lets wind,
Through her gay gardens distributing bloom,
They light, and spread their devastation round,
Bepainting black as pitch the green luxuriant ground.

V.

Just such a darkness mounts into the sky,
Of hat and hood, of bonnet and of cap,
So thick, that those who swing them up on high
Below i'the shade are heard to shout and clap;
For still the folk applaud it lustily,
And pain their tingling palms with noisy rap,
Expressing thus, with deaf'ning acclamation,
Of ROBERT'S merry tale their hearty approbation.

VI.

Nor sits the Monarch idle to th'acclaim;
But, rising up majestic from his chair,
With kingly praise augments the victor's fame,
And clapping, grinds between his palms the air:
Then seizes he the fingers of the dame,
And, gently raising from her seat the fair,
He, as the sign and seal of marriage-band,
Slips into ROBERT'S grasp his MAGGIE'S tender hand.

VII.

He bade his choir of trumpeters apply
To mouth their hollow instruments of sound,
And, in an unison of clangour high,
Publish the marriage to the world around:
The fellows blew it to the peak of sky,
And sky sent down again the loud rebound:
Earth did to heav'n's high top the news up-throw,
And heav'n re-bruited back th'alarum down below.

VIII.

But now the beam-hair'd coursers of the sun,
All-smoking with their fiery hot fatigue,
Their task of charioting had pranc'd and run,
And hurl'd in sea their hissing golden gig:
Their unshorn driver had but just begun
Beyond the isle of Bute the wave to swig;
And, twinkling o'er Auld Reekie's smoke afar,
Peep'd through heav'n's mantle blue the modest evening star.

IX.

And soon the Moon in hood of silver drest,
All glistering and gladsome as may be,
Forth from her glorious casement in the east
Look'd laughing down upon both land and sea;
And on the bosom of the dark'ning west
Her pearly radiance shot rejoicingly:
Also the heads of all that fill the Loan
Wax'd yellow with the rays that on them streaming shone.

X.

Wherefore, as now the damp nocturnal air
Began to dribble down its chilly dew,
And as, of all the business of the Fair,
Nought now remain'd upon the green to do;
The herald, from beside the monarch's chair,
Abroad the signal of dispersion blew,
That the wide multitude, dispread around,
Should now break up its mass, and leave the nighted ground.

XI

Which heard, the congregated folk upbroke
With loud disruption their diffusion vast,
And, split and shoaling off in many a flock,
With homeward squeeze they turbulently past:

Beneath their feet the pillar'd earth did rock,
As up to Jove a dusty cloud they cast,
That blear'd the bright eyes of Night's glimm'ring queen,
And chok'd the brilliant stars, and dimm'd their twinkling sheen.

XII.

And such the clutter was, when shoal from shoal
With violent impulse was torn and riv'n,
As when the vaulting ice, that floors the pole,
Touch'd by the fiery shafts of warming heav'n,
Splits into fractur'd isles, that crash and roll
Diverse, athwart the molten ocean driv'n;
The Greenland boatman hears the noise afar,
And blesses for its heat day's winter-routing star.

XIII.

So loudly rush'd from ANSTER's cumber'd Loan,
The burdenous and bustling multitude,
Kicking th'o'ertrampled earth they trod upon
With saucy heel in their impetuous mood;
Some to their tents of blanket jump'd anon,
That on the fields and crofts adjoining stood;
Some to their booths and houses in the town,
Hie hot with huddling haste, and hop and hurry down.

XIV.

Meanwhile, the King, as now sufficient space
Was for his passage clear'd about the mound,
Descended from his lofty honour'd place,
Where sat he mid his gallant courtiers round:
Close at his right hand downward walk'd with grace,
The well-earn'd prize, bright MAGGIE the renown'd;
While the great victor, at his other side,
Attended blythe and brisk, exulting in his bride.

XV.

On their brave nags their persons up they swing,
And to the borough gently jogging ride,
Hemm'd thick around with an illustrious ring
Of gay Court-ladies, trooping side by side,
And Lords, whose coats with gold-lace spangl'd, fling
Back on th'abashed Moon her beamy pride,
And jolly Knights, and booted Esquires stout,
And burghers, clowns, and boys, a noisy rabble-rout.

XVI.

As downward to the town they tramp and trot,
The mingled peals of gratulation rise;
For on their catlings, fiddlesticks, I wot,
Bicker'd and skipt in funny furious wise,
And trumpet rear'd again its solemn note
Sonorously, assailant on the skies,
Full loudly lifting in a jocund tune,
The name of RANTER ROB up to the man i'the moon.

XVII.

And sounding cymbals clink and ring sublime,
Clash'd overhead in lofty unison;
And fife and flute in merry whistle chime,
Soothing the lulled ear with dulcet tone;
While aye the bass-drum, at his proper time,
Swallows the music with his sudden groan;
Till drum, flute, cymbal, trumpet, all are drown'd
In shouts, that pealing rise from the mad mob around.

XVIII.

Thus rode the train, as if in triumph down,
Exulting, through the night's moon-gilded shade,
Till reaching MAGGIE's quarter of the town,
Stops at her house the splendid cavalcade.
(For be it now, my good co-townsmen, known,
That in th'East-green's best house fair MAGGIE staid,
Near where St Ayle's small lodge in modern day
Admits to mystic rites her bousy masons gay.)

XIX.

At MAGGIE's door they stopp'd; when, lighting there,
The bridegroom brisk, and jolly-minded King,
And showy Nobleman, and Lady fair,
From pad and saddle on the causey spring,
And, passing in due order up her stair,
The good landlady to her chamber bring,
A pomp of rare attendance brave and bright,
With sweetly-biting jest, and joke of dear delight.

XX.

In her torch-brighten'd chamber down they sate
Upon her chairs, jocundly one and all,
And exercise their tongues in social prate,
Till MAGGIE's cooks and JAMES's seneschal
May well prepare and range each supper plate
On her long table in her dining-hall:—
There let us leave a while, King, Lord, and Lady,
And saunter through the town till supper's fare be ready

XXI.

Heav'ns! how from street to street the people reel,
As if they knew not where to rush for joy!
How rocks the causey with incessant heel
Of hurrying man, and wife, and maid, and boy!
From lane and wynd the sounds of gladness peal,
Hitting the stars with clamorous annoy;
As all the houses' walls and roofs are bright
With bonfire's yellow glow, and candles' gentler light.

XXII.

For in each window's every pane is seen,
Stuck into fitly-fashion'd wood or clay,
A tallow candle flinging forth its sheen,
T'augment th'illumination's grand display;
How flame the houses with a lustre keen,
In emulation of the sun-bright day!
Ev'n the poor old-wife's backroom-window glows,
Gilding the good green kail that underneath it grows.

XXIII.

While in each well-paved street and alley strait,
And at the Cross, and up along the Loan,
Their spiry curls huge bonfires elevate,
Cracking with heat the ground and causey-stone;
For ev'ry bonfire was a cart-load great
Of Dysart coal, that redly flash'd and shone,
Emblazing with its tongues of flame so bright,
The dusk and smutty brow of star-bestudded night.

XXIV.

And, gawntress'd round each ruddy fire about,
Hogsheads of porter and of cheery ale,
Forth from their little gurgling bung-holes spout
Their genial streams in tankard, pot, and pail:
Oh 'twas a wild notorious guzzling-bout!
That night no throat was narrow, or was frail,
But, in long draughts delicious, swallow'd down
The barley's mantling cream, and bev'rage stout and brown.

XXV.

(Not from thy brew-house's well-barrell'd store,
Oh ROGER! comes a drink of stronger proof,
Though foams thy hearty ale the tankard o'er,
And sends its cork a-thund'ring to the roof:
Ev'n ancient men, whose hairs were thin and hoar,
Then staid not from the fuddle's fun aloof,
But drank till every head was giddy turning,
And to their reeling eyes each fire in sky seem'd burning.

XXVI.

Yet not all night each brisk warm-blooded boy,
Sat drinking with his sweetheart blythe and boon;
They on the Loan, in many a reel, employ
Their bouncing bodies wriggling to the moon,
And almost wince away their heels for joy,
Tossing and riving their dance-bursten shoon,
Whilst, ever and anon, or ere she wist,
Smack by her partner dear each bonny lass was kiss'd.

XXVII.

Such out of doors was the disport and bouse;
But higher was the pitch of joy within;
That night was ANSTER's every barn and house
Converted into tippling-shop and inn;
Garrets and bed-rooms reek with hot carouse,
And steaming punch of whisky and of gin;
The kitchen fires are crowded round and round
With rings of lively lads, that swig their bowls profound.

XXVIII.

Hey! how their glasses jingle merrily!
How rings the table with their revel-roar!
How, as they toast their MAG with three times three,
Sounds with loud heel the vex'd tormented floor!

They sing, they clap, they laugh with honest glee;
Were never seen such merry men heretofore!
Through window glass and stony wall bursts out
Abroad on night's dull ear the wassail's frequent shout.

XXIX.

But now, in MAGGIE'S tapestry-deck'd hall,
Serv'd is the sumptuous marriage-supper up,
And clean neat-handed cook and seneschal
Hath set each mess, and dish, and plate, and cup;
So down in seemly order sit they all,
With stomachs stiff and resolute to sup,
And set their griding forks and knives to work,
On turkey, goose, and hen, cold veal, and cheek of pork.

XXX.

Behoves it not my bardship to relate
What various viands burden'd MAGGIE'S board;
What lay on this, and what on t'other plate,
What Lady first was help'd, and by what Lord,
What mess the King, and what the others ate:
That would be tedious trifling, 'pon my word;
I will not do't, though I could tell, in sooth,
How oft each fork was rais'd to every munching mouth.

XXXI.

Suffice it, good my townsmen, that ye know,
That there fastidious teeth found pleasant food,
That all the cates that kingly banquets show
Were spread before them, fragrant, rich, and good;
And that, though some ate less and some ate moe,
Each ate as much, be certain, as he could;
Till, tir'd at last of piddling with their gums,
They eas'd of knife and fork their fingers and their thumbs.

XXXII.

But when the sound of teeth had ceas'd i'the hall,
And fork and knife lay idle on their plate,
And guest and hostess, backward leaning all,
Their picktooths now were plying, saturate,
Up from his seat arose the bridegroom tall,
Where to his blooming spouse oppos'd he sate,
And, e'er the table-cloth was ta'en away,
He turn'd him to the King, and thus addrest his say:—

XXXIII.

"Think not, my Liege, that fortune or that chance
To-day hath made me in my conquest blest,
Impelling me by casual circumstance,
To jump without a warrant like the rest;
'Twas not alone with Heav'n's high sufferance,
I put my jumping-prowess to the test;
'Twas by its order I in sack was bound;
'Twas with its favour too that I my bride have found.

XXXIV.

Nor deem that some dumb beldam, Satan's tool,
Or wily witch, or second-sighted seer,
Hath, oracling, deceiv'd me like a fool,
To think I to supernal Pow'r am dear;
No, Monarch; by the cowl of old St Rule!
I heard the order with no proxy ear,
And with my own true eye unfalsified,
I ev'n upon my chair the goodly vision spied:

XXXV.

For, on an evening in December last,
('Twas just the evening of that day, whereon
The stout-lung'd criers through the Border past,
Proclaiming what should hap in ANSTER Loan,)
As down to supper's sober cool repast
I sat me in my dining-room alone,
Musing upon the late heard news so odd,
Blown from the trump of fame and crier's throat abroad.

XXXVI.

I happen'd in my fingers up to take
The pepper-box, where lurk'd my spicy stores,
And held it o'er my plate, intent to shake
The fragrant atoms from its little bores,
When, as my hand inverted it, there brake
Out from the tin lid's perforated pores,
A stream of beauteous smoke, that, like a mist,
Curl'd its delicious wreaths around my shaded fist.

XXXVII.

Astonish'd at the prodigy, I threw
The steaming box upon the table-cloth,
When, more with miracle t'amaze my view,
It frisk'd and trotted mid the plates i' troth,
And ceas'd not from its num'rous holes to spue
Its incense white as flakes of ocean froth,
Up-sending to the ceiling of the room
Its supernat'ral flux of pure and fragrant fume.

XXXVIII.

I sat and gaz'd—not long; when, strange to say,
Forth from that reeky pillar's paly base,
Started at once a little female fay,
Giggling and blythely laughing in my face:
Her height was as the lily, that in May
Lifts to the sun her head's envermeil'd grace;
Her beauty as the rays of various glow,
That glorify the length of heav'n's sea-drinking bow.

XXXIX.

The gown in which her elf-ship was array'd,
Like to the peacock's painted feather shined,
And on the table-cloth redundant spread
Its lustrous train for half a foot behind;
Over her breast her purple-striped plaid
Lay floating loose and thin as woven wind;
And gorgeous was her head-dress, as the hue
Of Iris-flower, that spreads her velvet petals blue.

XL.

Deck'd was her neck's circumference with row
Of diamonds, strung on thread in costly band,
Small pearly berries that are wont to grow
Upon the bushes of old Fairyland;
And in each diamond's orb so fair in show,
My candle's image burning seem'd to stand,
That her white slender neck was all in gleam,
Doubly impearled thus with light's reflected beam.

XLI.

And pendant from her neck, by golden thread,
A little dangling silver lute I saw,
Of fashion rare, and quaintly polished,
Not thicker than a pipe of oaten straw:
She laugh'd and nodded courteously her head,
Belike to clear away my doubt and awe,
For, sooth to say, I was not unafear'd,
When from my pepper-box good lady fay appear'd.

XLII.

She dropt a curtsey, reverently low,
And thus bespoke in clear and mellow voice;
'Twas sweeter than the chiming winds that blow
Upon the Æolian harp a whiffled noise:—
'Excuse me, good your worship! that I so
With my quaint presence mar your supper's joys;
I have some little matter to impart;
'Twill not detain you long.—Nay, ROBERT, do not start:

XLIII.

Compose thee, Squire, and calmly give thine ear
To what shall from my gentle mouth proceed,
For mickle shall it profit thee to hear,
And prize aright the value of my rede;
And be assur'd thy person, ROB, is dear
To the slim creatures of the fairy breed,
That thus I peer from out my box of spice,
To tender, for thy weal, my uncompell'd advice:

XLIV.

Hast thou not heard the wond'rous news to-day,
Through all the marches of the Border blown,
Of sports, and games, and celebrations gay,
Promulgate to be held in ANSTER Loan,
And that a maid the victor's toils shall pay,
A maid, whose beauty is excell'd by none!
Thou hast—and I surprised thee deep in muse,
A-pond'ring on th'import of such amazing news:

XLV.

Go, when o'er Cockraw peeps light's golden horn,
And seek a supple ass whereon to ride;
Go, seek a long sack, sturdy and untorn,
Wherein to jump with drolly-trammel'd stride;

Go, seek a bagpipe whose wind-pouch unworn,
May well the wrath of prison'd breath abide;
Go, set thy brain to work like vat of ale,
And skim thou off for MAG some smart ingenious tale.

XLVI.

And know, when at the Loan is tried thy skill,
Thy ass I'll nettle on with spur unseen;
Into thy bones and sinews I'll instil
Great vigour to o'erjump the quaking green;
Thy bagpipe's pouch with tempest I will fill,
Lending thy tune a witchery not mean;
And from thy study-rack'd perplexed brains,
A merry tale I'll squeeze, the helpmate of thy pains.

XLVII.

So shalt thou, Squire, in Scotland's view be crown'd
Upon the spot with victory and fame,
And ride a happy bridegroom from the ground,
Elate and glorying in thy peerless dame:
Yet when thy toil's transcendant prize is found,
And marriage revelries thy joy proclaim,
I charge thee, as my aid shall make thee blest,
Forget not what I now, as to my box, request:

XLVIII.

This box—this pepper-box—this homely shrine,
Wherein confin'd by wizard spell I stay,
Must be transported in a pouch of thine,
When thou to ANSTER Loan dost take thy way;
And when thou down to marriage feast and wine
Shalt sit, in MAGGIE's hall, a bridegroom gay,
Then from thy pocket draw it in a trice,
And on the table-cloth lay down the box of spice.

XLIX.

Ask not the purport of my odd behest;
'Twill be unriddl'd in the proper place;
'Tis thine t'effect the task, and leave the rest
To Madam Puck's good complaisance and grace.'—
Here Madam Puck her piping voice suppress,
And, with a sweet smile on her little face,
Rear'd up the small lute in her lily fist,
And with her rose-red lip its furbish'd silver kiss'd.

L.

She play'd a tune so delicate and sweet,
So overpow'ring with its ravishment,
That sit I could no longer on my seat,
But up and cap'ring o'er my chamber went,
As if within the soles of both my feet,
A store of frisky Mercury was pent
(And, by the bye, 'twas just the tune with which
My bagpipe did to-day your reeling Loan bewitch).

LI.

At length she ceas'd, and in a stroke o'the eye
Delv'd down within her jail of tin again,
And in her stead left curling bonnily
A smoke whose odour ravish'd nose and brain—
No more, my gracious Liege—what need have I
Longer to talk, where talking would be vain?—
Behold—what Mrs Puck commanded me—
'Tis but a sorry thing—the pepper-box—d'ye see?"

LII.

Thus speaking, from the pocket of his coat,
Wherein he had convey'd it to our town,
The goblin-haunted pepper-box he brought,
And, laughing, set it on the table down;
Great laughter crackled in the Monarch's throat,
As on the cloth he saw the tin y-thrown;
And giggling guest 'gan fling his jeers and jokes
Upon the paltry frame of ROB's poor pepper-box.

LIII.

But soon was changed their blythe to fearful mood,
When strait, afore each half-mistrusting eye,
The bawbling box of pepper, where it stood,
Began again to dance spontaneously,
And fidg'd and frisk'd, in strange inquietude,
Among the plates that thickly-ranged lie,
Directing to the table's middle part
Its motion by the side of broken pie and tart.

LIV.

Yet to a greater pitch their wonder grew,
When, at the table's other end, they spy
Fair MAGGIE's mustard-pot commencing too
To gambol and to fidge in sympathy
(The self-same pot, whence burst to MAGGIE's view,
Of late Tom Puck, with brightly-breeched thigh);
As would a hen leap on a fire-hot griddle,
So leap'd the mustard-pot toward the table's middle.

LV.

Short while they flirted, pepper-box and pot,
Most laughable, yet fearful to be view'd,
Till, meeting on the table's midmost spot,
Stock-still th'ignoble bouncing vessels stood,
And from their little cells, where lay the hot
Ground pepper, and the biting mustard good,
Were in a moment seen at once to break
Two parallel white shafts of silv'ry spouting reek.

LVI.

Ascending curl'd, not long, each sep'rate fume,
Up-throwing to the roof its preciousness,
When with a fire-flash that emblaz'd the room,
Burst from the hollow mustard-pot's recess
Good Tommy Puck, the fay of roseate bloom,
Clad in his custom'd gaudery of dress;
And, with a second gleam of flashy light,
Sprung from the spicy-box good Madam Puck to sight.

LVII.

With faces to each other turn'd they rise,
Scarce sunder'd by a finger's length of space,
And, in an instant, as they recognise,
With glimpse of quick eye, each the other's face,
They fall, as if o'ercome with sweet surprise,
On one another's necks in close embrace,
Like friends that, having long liv'd far apart,
Meet and relieve in tears the joy-o'erburden'd heart.

LVIII.

Astonishment his whitely ensign shows
On each spectator's visage at the sight;
Courtier and King, that sat to table close,
Slily push'd back their chairs, confounded quite;
The ladies hid their faces in their clothes,
Or underneath the table slunk for fright;
Save MAG and ROB, who laugh'd to see once more,
The tricksy kindly ouphes that hail'd them heretofore.

LIX.

Awhile the pair of pigmies on the spot,
Lock'd their fantastic persons jole to jole,
And, as two doves of plumy-varnish'd throat
Sit billing in their dove-cot's nested hole,
Their liquid wee lips twitter'd kisses hot
In fond commutuality of soul;
It was a treat to see how sweetheart-like
Their fiery fairy mouths the dear collision strike!

LX.

At length, as rapture's first excess was past,
They disentangle their endear'd embrace,
And, tow'rd the King and guests that sat aghast,
Turn'd round each minim prettiness of face;
Dame Puck, to MAG and those beside her plac'd,
Let fall a curtsey with a courtly grace;
Tom, fronting JAMES, took hat from off his brow,
And curv'd his goblin back into a goodly bow.

LXI.

A glance upon the company he shot,
And smil'd on MAG that sat at head o'the board,
Then from his silly dulcet-piping throat
Sweet utterance of word-clad breath he pour'd:—
"Oh Monarch! let amazement seize thee not;
Be of good cheer, each dame and noble Lord!
Ungown your timid faces, all ye fair!
Draw ye to table close, each gentleman your chair!

LXII.

For do not think that in us twain you spy
Two spirits of the perter wicked sort,
That, buzzing on bad errand through the sky,
In pranks of molestation take their sport,

Confounding old-wives' churns, and slipping sly
Their stools from underneath them to their hurt,
Or chucking young sweet maids below the chin,
That so they bite the tongue their tender mouths within.

LXIII.

Of kindlier hearts are Tommy and his spouse,
Aidant to some, benevolent to all;
For oft we sweep the thrifty matron's house
With besom quaint, invisible, and small,
Oft from her cheese and butter chase the mouse,
Preyless, into the cavern of his wall,
And oft her churn-staff gripe, that in a twink
The waves of bubbling cream to buttery masses sink.

LXIV.

But chiefly of young lovers true and kind,
The patrons and the guardians good are we,
Linking each mutual and harmonious mind
In silver cord of dear complacency;
But when the vows, that should restrain and bind,
Broke to another's misery we see,
'Tis ours to take the injur'd lover's part,
And on the perjur'd head deal out th'avenging smart.

LXV.

Witness what vengeance hit Miss Susan Scott,
Whose back and visage, for her breach of troth,
Obtain'd a penal and opprobrious blot,
Swoln out to counterpoise each other's growth;
And though, for our suggestion of that plot,
To punish her and her sour guardian both,
My wife and I hath suffer'd hard and long,
Yet, by my Monarch's beard! 'twas right t'avenge the wrong.

LXVI.

Oh we have suffer'd much!—that wizard foul
(Beshrew his meagre vile malicious ghost!)
No sooner 'scap'd from Crail's vile sewer-hole,
And took again the shape that he had lost,
Than, with his long-tail'd demons black as coal,
That whiz to serve him from hell's ev'ry coast,
Consulting in his study, soon he learn'd
Who prompted Charles to wreak the vengeance justly earn'd.

LXVII.

Then churn'd the sorcerer's mouth the surly foam;
He clench'd his fist, and swore by Beelzebub,
He forthwith should o'er half the country roam,
Beating each thicket with his oaken club,
To find out dapper intermeddling Tom
In his inhabited and secret shrub,
And heel him forth reluctant to the day,
And for his pranks chastise upon his breech the fay.

LXVIII.

His hat he put on his craft-crammed head;
He grip'd his hugy gnarl'd staff in hand,
And down his study-stair, with sounding tread,
Came spitting smoke like newly-lighted brand:
Forth from the gate he in a hurry sped,
To beat the total bushes of the land,
Cursing at every step the harmless breed
Of elfs, that aid the wrong'd in grievous time of need.

LXIX.

Need it be told? Alas! too soon he found
The bush, where with my dame I sleeping lay;
Too soon his cudgel, thrashing round and round,
Graz'd our slim bodies in its dang'rous play;
And, had not Ob'ron sav'd us both from wound,
Our brains had fairly been dash'd out that day;
We woke—we shriek'd—his rugged hand he stretch'd,
And from our leafy bed us by the heels he fetch'd.

LXX.

His long-nail'd hairy fingers, grasping tight
Our waists, uprear'd us to his bearded chin,
And held us there in melancholy plight,
Wriggling our innocent frail members thin:
He spat upon our faces with despite,
Glooming his phiz into a joyful grin;
Then, lowering down, he plung'd us ere we wot,
Each int'a sep'rate pouch of his great clumsy coat.

LXXI.

There lay we button'd in, and closely pent
In a dark dungeon of detested cloth,
As, tracing back his steps, he homeward went,
And to his chamber bore us dangling both;
He drew us forth, the wicked churl, intent
On base revenge, malevolent and wroth,
And with unseemly usage treated each,
And slapp'd with scurvy palm my little harmless breech.

LXXII.

Then did he in his wickedness begin
To practise his detestable device;
He took a paltry pepper-box of tin,
And, hoisting up my consort in a trice,
He push'd her weeping ladyship within,
Clean through the lid amid the pungent spice
(For fairy shapes can be contracted so
As through a needle's eye right easily to go):

LXXIII.

He push'd her shrieking down into the cell,
With cruel taunt and mocking devilish,
And mutter'd o'er her a confining spell
Of hell's abhorr'd and uncouth gibberish:—
'Lie there, Dame Puck!' he cried, *'and bed thee well*
In the snug durance of thy penal dish;
There be a tenant till the day shall come
Ordain'd t'enfranchise thee from thy ignoble tomb!'

LXXIV.

A sorry mustard-pot then took the Knight,
And, 'tween his fingers lifting me sublime,
He push'd and plung'd me, yelling with affright,
Amid the mustard's yellow sloughy slime;
And, *'Lie thou there,'* he cried, *'thou meddling sprite:*
And do the proper penance for thy crime;
There be a tenant till the day shall come
Ordain'd t'enfranchise thee from thy ignoble tomb!

LXXV.

Nor meet Tom Puck and Madam Puck agen,
Until the fairest maid of Scottish land
Shall to the supplest of all Scotland's men,
Charm'd by his jumping, give her bed and hand.'
This said, he mumbled o'er me in my den
His damned spell too hard to understand,
Of virtue to impound, and cage me there,
Ev'n till the day foredoom'd to let me loose to air.

LXXVI.

And further, he, to sunder us the more,
And interpose large space between us twain,
To Melrose Abbey journeying, with him bore
The spicy jail, where lay my spouse in pain,
And gave it to the monks, skill'd deep in lore,
That in their charge it might for years remain,
To grace the abbey-table, and supply
Their kail on feasting-days with pepper hot and dry.

LXXVII.

And there, methinks, for ages it has been;
Till, as roll'd onward Time's fulfilling round,
By the wise care of our fair fairy-queen,
To Rob the Ranter's house the way it found,
Where, from her box upstarting to his eyne
(The spell that moment lost its power t'impound),
My wife bade Scotland's supplest man prepare,
All for her weal and his, to jump at Anster Fair.

LXXVIII.

For me—when first that stern felonious Knight,
Had dungeon'd me in penal-pot so fast,
My jail he did commit that very night
To Pittenweem's fat monks of belly vast,
That from its small profundity they might
Supply with mustard every rich repast,
And in the abbey-pantry guard the cell,
Where I, alas! was doom'd for many an age to dwell.

LXXIX.

And there I dwelt in dolesome house of clay,
Far sunder'd from my wife in sad divorce;
Till onward drew the freedom-giving day,
Fix'd and appointed in Time's fatal course,

When Oberon, the silver-scepter'd fay,
That rules his phantom-tribes with gentle force,
My mustard-pot by secret means convey'd
To MAGGIE's house—the house of Scotland's fairest maid.

LXXX.

Here, as one night upon her supper-board,
Imbogg'd amid my biting mire I lay,
My king a moment broke the spell abhorr'd,
That kept me pent and pester'd night and day:
I rose, I loos'd my tongue to mortal word,
Commanding her to publish sans delay,
The merry games effectual to decide
What supplest-sinew'd Scot should gain her for his bride

LXXXI.

Abroad the games were blown o'er Scottish ground,
And hurried thousands in to ANSTER FAIR:
The work is done—the supplest man is found;
He sits the Bridegroom and the Landlord there;
The fairest Maid of all the realm around
Sits yonder, star-like shining on her chair—
The happiest couple they of all beside:
God bless you richly both, fair Bridegroom and fair Bride!

LXXXII.

Nor think, my wedded dears! that you alone
By ANSTER's gamesome FAIR are render'd blest;
We, too, that have so long with mutual moan
In torment and divorcement liv'd distrest,
Meet now again (great thanks to Oberon!)
Re-wedded, re-possessing, re-possess'd,
A pair of happy fays conjoin'd for ever,
Whom henceforth wizard's hate shall have no might to sever.

LXXXIII.

And now, my Lord, oh King! we must away
To taste the sweets of new-found liberty,
To ride astraddle on the lunar ray
In airy gallop to the top of sky,
And lave our limber limbs, and plash and play
Amid the milk that dims the galaxy:
Farewell!—may joys be rain'd on each of you!
Adieu, thou Bridegroom sweet! thou bonny Bride, adieu!"

LXXXIV.

This having said, he on his shiny hair
Did gracefully his silver'd hat replace,
And seizing by the hand his lady fair,
A while look'd smerking, winking, in her face;
Then swift as spark from fire, or beam from star,
That unsubstantial, slim, frail, fairy-brace,
From table heaving off their phantasms small,
Sheer through the window flew of MAGGIE's dining-hall.

LXXXV.

Sheer through the window fleetly flew the twain,
Mocking the eye that tried to follow them;
Yet, strange to add! nor wood nor glassy pane
Was injur'd of the fay-pierc'd window frame—
Amazement ran in every beating vein
Of Bride, and Groom, and King, and Lord, and Dame,
As they beheld the coupled goblins fly
Through window-shut and glass abroad into the sky

LXXXVI.

Recover'd quickly of their short surprise,
They drew to table nearer each his chair;
"A bumper fill," the sportive Monarch cries,
"To Tom and Lady Puck, the elfin pair!"
Landlord and guest his brimming glass supplies
From bottle with the dainty vine-blood rare;
Clean to the dregs their glasses drink they all,
As "Tom and Mrs Puck!" sound echoing through the hall.

LXXXVII.

Thus they the social happy minutes spend
In wine, and chat, and harmless revelry,
Till slow began the round moon to descend
Down the starr'd ladder of the western sky,
And sleep, that toil-worn man's frail frame must mend,
His spunge's balsam wrung on human eye;
From table, then, withdrew to sleeping room,
Courtier, and King, and Dame, and Bride, and glad Bridegroom.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THE WINTER DAY.

ADDRESSED TO R. S——, ESQ.

Now Jove in flaky snow descends;
A sounding storm the welkin rends;
Fountains and pools are all congeal'd,
And frost doth bristle hill and field;
Then, boy, with fuel heap the hearth,
Excite th'illumin'd room to mirth,
Spread on the board the smoking feast,
And from the wine-crypt bring the best.

See, see! how spatter'd thick and white,
The snow up-chokes the window's light;
Glass panes within are bright embost,
With pretty forests carv'd by frost:
And, hark! how o'er the chimney raves
The wind let loose from Norway's caves,
Scowling, as if with anger mad,
That we within should be so glad.

Come, come, my friend, and leave a while
Day's soul-absorbing endless toil;
Within, without, each sight invites
T'enjoy the chamber's boon delights;
The candles on the table glow,
The damask cloth outshines the snow;
Cup, wine-glass, platter, all are bright,
The very chairs shine out with light.

Without, the tempest lords it high,
As if his own were all the sky;
The snow-fraught clouds, low-hung and black,
O'er-scud the world with rapid rack;
Scarce in the streets a shiv'ring wight
Is seen, with nose all blue and white;
Scarce in the fields may Robin find
A refuge from the drift and wind.

Then come, my friend, and as thy part,
Bring to my feast a jocund heart—
A soul dispos'd to join with me,
In talk of dear philosophy;
No slanders shall our speech pollute,
No noise, no long and proud dispute,
Such as fall out in faction's brawls—
Where wisdom muses, folly bawls.

Away with these, but in their stead,
Be our discourse of sages dead,
And how their wisdom hath refin'd,
And crown'd with god-like grace mankind;
Themes talk'd of many years agone
By Solon or by Solomon—
Themes wherewith Plato, at his feasts,
Made jovial, ev'n as Jove's, his guests.

But should it hap to be our mood,
T'alight from wisdom's altitude,
Why, we can childish-sportful be;
Who have so good a right as we?
Though learn'd and grave, at times we can
Keep up the glee with any man,
Nay—none alive I know or see
Can nonsense talk like you and me!

SONG—MINNIE TO HER SPINNIN'-WHEEL.

Imitated from the German of Burger.

Birr on, birr on, my spinnin'-wheel!
Spin on, spin on, my birrin' wheel!
The roofs and wa's are dash't wi' rain;
The wind doth gowl at ilka pane;
But here I sit fu' warm and dry,
And care na for the blasts out-by,
Aye birrin' at my spinnin'-wheel!

Birr on, birr on, my spinnin'-wheel!
Spin on, spin on, my birrin' wheel!
Hey, how the towslet tow comes down!
Hey, how the wheel rins roun' and roun'!
How merrily, hey, the tirlin' pirn
Snaps wi' its iron teeth the yairn,
Aye followin' fast the birrin' wheel!

Birr on, birr on, my spinnin'-wheel!
Spin on, spin on, my birrin' wheel!
Kate's bridal day will soon be here,
And she maun hae her pairt o' gear;
The weaver's hands are toom o' wark,
He's crying loud for sheet or sark,
And flytes you, lazy spinnin'-wheel!

Birr on, birr on, my spinnin'-wheel!
Spin on, spin on, my birrin' wheel!
Haud aff, ye bairns, touch nae the rock,
Play farrer aff, wee Jean and Jock;
For Minnie is taskit, and set to hae
A braw linen wab ere sweet May-day,
Wi' birrin' at her spinnin'-wheel!

Birr on, birr on, my spinnin'-wheel!
Spin on, spin on, my birrin' wheel!
The roofs and wa's are dash'd wi' rain;
The wind doth gowl at ilka pane;
But here I sit fu' warm and dry,
And care na for the blasts out-by,
Aye birrin' at my spinnin'-wheel!

ODE TO PEACE.

1814.

Daughter of God! that sits on high
Amid the dances of the sky,
And guidest with thy gentle sway
The planets on their tuneful way;
Sweet PEACE! shall ne'er again
The smile of thy most holy face,
From thine etherial dwelling-place,
Rejoice the wretched weary race
Of discord-breathing men?

Too long, oh gladness-giving Queen!
Thy tarrying in heav'n has been;
Too long o'er this fair blooming world
The flag of blood has been unfurl'd,
Polluting God's pure day;
Whilst, as each madd'ning people reels,
War onward drives his scythed wheels,
And at his horse's bloody heels
Shriek Murder and Dismay!

Oft have I wept to hear the cry
Of widow wailing bitterly;
To see the parent's silent tear
For children fall'n beneath the spear;
And I have felt so sore
The sense of human guilt and woe,
That I, in Virtue's passion'd glow,
Have cursed (my soul was wounded so)
The shape of man I bore!

Then come from thy serene abode,
Thou gladness-giving Child of God!
And cease the world's ensanguin'd strife,
And reconcile my soul to life;
For much I long to see,
Ere to the grave I down descend,
Thy hand her blessed branch extend,
And to the world's remotest end
Wave Love and Harmony!

ON MY MOTHER'S DECEASE,

NOVEMBER 1831.

My mother dead! what weight of grief
Lies in these little words to me!
Again, again, I am a child,
And fond affection's tears flow free!
Back, back, into my school-boy days,
Rushes my eager memory,
And stirreth up the various scenes
A mother's love endear'd to me.

Again I see her anxious look,
When childhood's sorrows on me lay;
I hear her voice, which, full of hope,
Sooth'd all these childish ails away;
Each word she spoke, each kindly deed
That from her fond hand flutt'ring came,
All rise afresh to sanctify,
Still more a mother's sacred name.

When from on high affliction came,
And fill'd my father's house with tears,
For her alone I felt—for her
My unconfessing soul had fears;
When joy came like an angel down,
To wipe the sorrows God had giv'n,
'Twas for her sake alone I bless'd
That gladness which came down from Heav'n.

Alas! from day to day I saw
Her feeble frame grow feeble more,
Whilst winter, that to youth gives joy,
His deadly gripe lay on her sore.
I mark'd her tott'ring step—I tried
Kindly to chide her into glee;
Yet scarce at bed-time could her lips
Utter the old "Good-night" to me.

At last the yet unwither'd bloom
That dim upon her face did lie,
Sunk, sunk at once to mortal pale;
I saw it—saw my mother die!
And, though her eye beheld me not,
Her features look'd tranquillity,
And from behind the veil of death
Sent her last blessing unto me!

Thanks, thanks, to Heav'n! my wish, my pray'r,
Hath been for many a changeful year,
That God might spare my life *for this—*
For this—a mother's heart to cheer.
And now that I have seen her age
Made glad, have seen her die in peace,
Careless and tranquil I await
The term of this my mortal race.

TO MY MOTHER'S SPINNING-WHEEL.

WRITTEN THE DAY AFTER HER DEATH—NOV. 1831.

Lo! silent now and motionless
Within the corner stands
The busy little engine, once
Mov'd by my mother's hands.
I bought it for her, low and light,
To turn in easy wise,
Thereby t'invite her aged feet,
To gentle exercise.

How gladsomely she sate her down,
Her self-set task to ply!
How lightsomely beside the hearth
Did winter evenings fly!
I question'd her of thrift, and all
Her linen-making toils,
And she inform'd my ignorance
All readily with smiles.

Idle a while the engine stood,
In autumn's jolly reign;
She chid herself for idleness,
And sought her wheel again.

She spread the flax all smooth, she warp'd
It round the distaff fair;
Alas! her hand ne'er touch'd the work—
She died, and left it there!

And now another hand must spin
The flaxen remnant out;
A foot of greater energy
Must force the wheel about.
No more my chamber with its hum,
At eve shall shaken be;
A housewife's thrift, a housewife's toils,
No more have charms for me!

Yet, little engine! though thy sound
No more shall please mine ear,
Yet ever to mine eye thou shalt
Be a memorial dear.
Ev'n for her sake that exercis'd
Her aged foot on thee,
I'll look on thee with love, and thou
Shalt never part from me!

THE TANGIERS GIANT.*

In Tangiers town, as I've been tauld,
There liv'd intill the times of auld
A giant stout and big,
The awfuest and the dourest carl
That on the outside o' this warl'
E'er wallop'd bane or leg.

When he was born, on that same day,
He was like other weans, perfay,
Nae langer than a ladle,
But in three days he shot sae lang,
That out wi's feet and head he dang
Baith end-boords o' his cradle.

And when the big-baned babe did see
How that his cradle, short and wee,
Could haud him in nae langer,
His passion took a tirrivee—
He grippit it, and garr'd it flee
To flinders, in his anger.

Ere he was spain'd, what beef, what bane,
He was a babe o' thretty stane,
And bigger than his mither;
Whan he for 's parritch grat at morn,
Men never heard syn they were born
A yowl sae fu' o' drither.

When he'd seen thretty years or sae,
Far meikler was his little tae
Than meikle Samuel's shouther;
When he down on a stool did lean,
The stool was in an instant gane,
And brizz'd clean down to pouther.

When through the streets o' Tangiers town
He gaed, spaziering up and down,
Houses and kirks did tremmle;
O' his coat-tail the vera wap
Rais'd whirlwinds wi' its flichterin' flap,
And garr'd auld lum-heads tummle.

Had ye been ten mile out o' town,
Ye might hae seen his head aboon
The highest houses towrin'.
Ilk awfu' tramp he gave the ground,
Garr'd aik-trees shake their heads a' round,
And lions rin hame cowerin'.

To shaw his pow'r unto the people,
Ance in his arms he took the steeple,
Kiss'd it, and ca'd it brither;
Syne from its bottom up it wrung,
And in the air three times it swung,
Spire, bell, and a' thegither!

And when he'd swung it merrily,
Again upon its bottom he
Did clap it down sae clever,
Except a sma' crack half-way round,
The steeple stood upon its found,
As stout and straucht as ever!

Ae king's birth-day, when he was fu',
Twa Tangier chaps began to pu'
His tails; when, on a sudden,
Ane by the richt leg up he grippit,
The tither by the neck he snippit,
And sent them skyward scuddin'.

On earth they ne'er again cam down;
Ane in a tan-pit i' the moon
Fell plump, and breath'd his last;
The tither ane was jammit ticht
'Tween twa stars o' the Pleiads bricht,
Whair yet he's sticking fast.

Ae day, when he stood near the sea,
A fleet o' Tyrian ships in glee
Was sailing gawcy by—
He gript ae frigate by the mast,
And frae the deep wi' powstie vast
He rais'd her in the sky:

And then the great ship up he tumml'd—
Her mast was down, her hulk up-whumml'd,
Her keel high i' the lift;
Captain and cargo down cam rummlin',
Marines, and men, and meat, cam tummlin'
Down frae her decks like drift.

He had a mammoth for his horse,
Whairon wi' michty birr and force
He rade baith up and down;
My certy! whan on him he lap,
For hill nor tree he didna stap—
For tower, nor yet for town.

From Calpe to the Chinese wa'
He travell'd in a day or twa;
And as he gallop't east,
The tower of Babel down he batter'd—
For five miles round its bricks were scatter'd,
Sic birr was in his beast!

But whan he cam to Ecbatan,
A terrible strabusch was than;
He soucht na street nor yett,
But hurly-burly, smash, smash, smash,
Through wa's and roofs he drave slap-dash,
Down-dundering a' he met:

What wi' his monster's thunderin' thud,
And what wi' brusch, and smusch, and scud,
O' rafters, slates, and stanes,
Ten thousand folk to dead were devell'd
Ten thousand mair were eirthlins levell'd,
Half-dead wi' fractur'd banes.

He travell'd, too, baith north and south,
Whiles for his hunger, whiles for drouth;
At Thebes* he brak his fast;
And at the far Cape o' Good Houp,
He took his denner, and a stoup
O' wine for his repast.

He tried, too, on his fearsome horse,
His way up to our Pole to force
To spy its whirlin' pin;
Up to the arctic ice-ribb'd flood
Nicherin' he cam, as he were wud,
Wi' dirdom and wi' din.

As north he rode, he didna wait
To mak a brig ower Helle's strait,
Like Persia's pridefu' king;
He loupit from Abydos' strand,
And thwack! on Sestos' beach did land,
Makin' hail Europe ring.

* For this giant of ninety feet or more, we have somewhat like classical authority. "Gabinius, the Roman historian, makes mention of the sepulchre of Antalus, near Tingi [or Tangiers], as also of a skeleton *sixty* cubits long [some better copies have *six*], which Sertorius disinterred and again covered with earth."—*Strabo lib.* 17, *cap.* 3.

* Egyptian Thebes.

As up through Thrace his beast did scour,
He kick'd up sic ane cloud o' stour
From his gambadin' hoof,
The king o' Thrace, where he in's ha',
Sat dinin' wi' his princes braw,
Was chokit wi' the stoof.

But when he reach'd Siberia's shore,
His monster wi' a grousom roar,
Down sank amang the snaw;
The beast was smor'd, and ne'er gat out;*
The rider, wi' ane damnet shout,
Sprang aff, and spreul'd awa!

His end was like his lawless life;
He challeng'd Atlas in some strife,
T'uphaud heiv'n on his head;
He tried the starry heiv'n t'uphaud—
Down cam the lift, and wi' a daud,
It smor'd the scoundrel dead!

MORAL.

From this dour giant we may see
How little, michty limb and thie,
The human race bestead;
A wee bit man wi meikle sense,
Is better than ane carle immense
Wi' nonsense in his head!

TAMMY LITTLE.

Wee Tammy Little, honest man!
I kent the body weel,
As round the kintra-side he gaed
Careerin' wi' his creel.

He was sae slender and sae wee,
That aye when blasts did blaw,
He ballasted himself wi' stanes
'Gainst bein' blawn awa.

A meikle stane the wee bit man
In ilka coat-pouch clappit,
That by the michty gowlin' wind
He michtna down be swappit.

When he did chance within a wood
On simmer days to be,
Aye he was frichtit lest the craws
Should heise him up on hie;

And aye he, wi' an aiken cud,
The air did thump and beat,
To stap the craws frae liftin' him,
Up to their nests for meat.

Ae day, when in a barn he lay,
And thrashers thrang were thair,
He in a moment vanish'd aff,
And nae man could tell whair.

They lookit till the riggin' up,
And round and round they lookit,
At last they fand him underneath
A firlot cruyled and crookit.

Ance as big Samuel past him by,
Big Samuel gave a sneese,
And wi' the sough o't he was cast
Clean down upon his knees.

His wife and he upon ane day
Did chance to disagree,
And up she took the bellowses,
As wild as wife could be;

She gave ane puff intill his face,
And made him, like a feather,
Flee frae the tae side o' the house,
Resoundin' till the tither!

* An enormous animal of the Mammoth class was disclosed by the melting of the snow in 1801, upon the snow-buried confines of Siberia. How the monster got there—how it was entombed there—appeared inexplicable to the philosophical inquirers of that period, and is only, and to our satisfaction, explained by the story of the text.

Ae simmer e'en, when as he through
Pitkirie forest past,
By three braid leaves, blawn aff the trees,
He down to yird was cast;

A tirl o' wind the three braid leaves
Down frae the forest dang,
Ane frae an ash, ane frae an elm,
Ane frae an aik-tree strang;

Ane strak him sair on the back neck
Ane on the nose him rappit,
Ane smote him on the vera heart,
And down as dead he drappit.

But ah! but ah! a drearier dool
Ance hapt at Ounston-dammy,
That heis'd him a' thegither up,
And maist extinguish't Tammy:

For as he came slow-daunderin' down,
In's hand his basket hingin',
And staiver'd ower the hie-road's breidth,
Frae side to side a-swingin',

There came a blast frae Kelly-law,
As bauld a blast as ever
Auld snivelin' Boreas blew abraid
To make the warld shiver.

It liftit Tammy aff his feet,
Mair easy than a shavin',
And hurl'd him half a mile complete
Hie up 'tween earth and heav'n.

That day puir Tammy had wi' stanes
No ballasted his body,
So that he flew, maist like a shot,
Ower corn-land and ower cloddy.

You've seen ane tumbler on a stage
Tumble sax times and mair,
But Tammy weil sax hundred times
Gaed tumblin' through the air.

And whan the whirly-wind gave ower,
He frae the lift fell plumb,
And in a blink stood stickin' fast
In Gaffer Glowr-weel's lum.

Ay—there his legs and body stack
Amang the smotherin' soot;
But by a wonderfu' good luck,
His head kept peepin' out.

But Gaffer Glowr-weel, when he saw
A man stuck in his lum,
He swarf'd wi' drither clean awa,
And sat some seconds dumb.

It took five masons near an hour
A' riving at the lum
Wi' picks (he was sae jamm'd therein)
Ere Tammy out could come.

As for his basket—weel I wat,
His basket's fate and fa'
Was, as I've heard douce neighbours tell,
The queerest thing of a'.

The blast took up the body's creel,
And laid it on a cloud,
That bare it, sailin' through the sky,
Richt ower the Firth's braid flood.

And when the cloud did melt awa,
Then, then the creel cam' down,
And fell'd the town-clerk o' Dunbar
E'en in his ain good town.

The clerk stood yelpin' on the street
At some bit strife that stirr'd him,
Down cam' the creel, and to the yird
It dang him wi' a dirdom!

THE EPITAPH FOR TAMMY.

Oh Earth! oh Earth! if thou hast but
A rabbit-hole to spair,
Oh grant the graff to Tammy's corp,
That it may nestle thair:

And press thou light on him, now dead,
That was sae slim and wee,
For, weel I wat, when he was quick,
He lightly prest on thee!

EPITAPH ON DAVID BARCLAY,

CHURCH-WARDEN IN ANSTRUTHER EASTER.

Here sleeps, from noisy mirth and laughter free,
The happiest man o' th'eighteenth century;
One who sat merrier on his cobbler's stool,
Than Louis Capet on his throne of rule;
He, who more harmless and with greater glee,
Made graves for corpses at the digger's fee,
Than proud Napoleon, for th'imperial spoil,
Made graves for millions o'er all Europe's soil;
What bliss heroic crown'd poor Barclay's state!
His very littleness did make him great!
Day chased day with pregnant laughter fraught,
Or some new joke, or some new old-shoe brought;
Night chased night with cheek-relaxing mirth,
And with fresh frolic made resound his hearth;
When brain-mad Europe reel'd from shore to shore,
And kings and peoples battl'd long and sore,
He on his stool, which no commotion shook,
Sat imperturb'd, nor of the rage partook;
What day the head of murder'd Capet fell,
And kingdoms shudder'd at the tocsin's knell,
He, in his cobbler's chamber fearing nought,
Sat whistling to his shadow as he wrought;
What day Napoleon from his height renown'd,
Was shook by Europe's earthquake to the ground,
His bloodless awl with unconcern he plied,
And sung his ditty by his ingle-side!
What day reformless Wellington was chas'd
Home to his barricaded house in haste
By England's men, that banded far and wide
To beat him down that beat Napoleon's pride,
Our Barclay, unannoy'd by earthly thing,
Cock'd in his clean snug chamber like a king;
He, rather as a cobbler blythe and free,
And as *himself*, chose sapiently to be,
Than, as the prop of kings and man of pride,
To terrify and to be terrified.
Peace, peaceful David, to thy shade, I say;
And, when thou com'st forth at the judgment day,
Whilst conqu'rors rise with shudd'ring and with pain,
Afraid to face the ghosts of those they've slain,
Thou shalt uprise with gladness in thy face,
To claim the prize of innocence and peace!

ON THE SAME—(SCOTICE.)

Here lies ane wight, ca'd David Barclay,
Weel sepulcher'd amang his hard clay;
Sma' man he was, whan he did flourish—
He was but beadle o' this parish,
And mendit soles, and chimlas soopit,
And blew mouse-wabs frae aff the pupit;
But now, when cramm'd in this wee partie,
He's just as great as Bonaparte!
Nae difference, save that David here
At hame sleeps 'mang his kindred dear,
Wi' ilka star, that kent him livin',
Blinkin' upon him blythe frae heaven:
Whereas the Emperor rots afar
At the warld's end, 'neath Hydra's star,
'Mang foreign worms that keen devour him,
And the cauld south-pole skytin' owre him.
This Barclay was a canty chappie,
Skull-handlin' made him nae less happy:
'Twas but his trade was melancholy,
His spirit aye was blythe and jolly.
King George the Third that ruled this land,
Wi' a braw sceptre in his hand,
And George's ilka son and daughter,
Ne'er took sic hearty gaups o' laughter.
I meikle doubt if a' the thrang
O' kings that in braid Europe rang,
Frae that black-starr'd year achty-nine,
E'en till the day I write this line,
Enjoy'd their lives wi' sic ane gust,
As David wha sleeps here in dust;
Sae, to be merry in this widdle,
Ilk station serves—heigh, laigh, and middle:
Its a' ae woo—king, lord, or beadle!
And let a man be mean or glorious,
Owre armies, or auld shoon, victorious,
Wield swords on fields, or awls on stools,
A' dree alike Death's dreary dools,
And land at length amang the *mools!*

TRANSLATIONS.

ODE

FROM THE PERSIAN OF HAFIZ.

Aee bad neseem yeear daree, &c.

Sweet gale, that on thy wings dost bear
Through sky the fragrance of my fair—
Ah! 'tis from her, I know 'tis from
The paradise of fume divine,
That does her angel-form enshrine,
That thou so balmy rich dost come!

Sweet breeze, that gambolest abroad,
Scatt'ring through thine etherial road,
Rich odours purloin'd from my fair;
Beware! such pilfering I forbid;
What right hast thou, a thief, to thrid
The tangles of her golden hair?

Oh rose! that on thy prickly tree,
Rightest thyself in boastful glee,
As beautiful beyond compare—
What, what art thou, with all thy grace,
To paragon thee to the face
Of her, whom God hath deck'd so fair?

Oh thou Narcissus! that so sweet
Hangest, in mid-day's hour of heat,
Thy leaves all languishingly faint—
What, what art thou to her bright eye,
That rolls itself so tenderly
In love's luxurious languishment?

Oh pine! that shootest up so high,
As if t'enclasp thy love the sky,
With thy tall arms that tower and twine,
Compar'd with her, as she doth move
Stately through garden or through grove,
What grace, what glory can be thine?

Oh ev'ry fragrant herb that round
Scatt'rest through all the garden's bound,
Clouds of rich incense to the sun,
Your luscious scents, your beauteous streaks,
What are they to the gorgeous cheeks
Of her, mine own bliss-breathing one?

Oh wisdom! with thy sapient stores,
Thy ken sublime, whose glance explores
Stars, lands, and oceans with their isles;
In all thy range—land, sky, or sea—
Seest thou ought better than to be
Her lover, living on her smiles?

Courage, oh Hafiz! yet endure
Thy trial; 'twill be crown'd, be sure,
With the full harvest of her charms;
If thou canst but thy pain support
With patience, albeit hard, yet short,
She flies all willing to thine arms!

THE FAIR MAID OF SHEERAZ.

FROM THE PERSIAN OF HAFIZ.

If that fair maid I fancy most,
The pearl of Sheeraz and its boast,
Would not my soul's desire withstand,
Ev'n for the mole, whose sparkling speck
Doth gem and glorify her cheek,
I would bestow, would she but take,
Bokhara and broad Samarcand.

Bring, bring, oh boy! to soothe my pains,
Th'untasted wine that yet remains;
For, not in high-prais'd Paradise
Thou'lt find to make thy soul as glad,
The sweet banks of our Rocnabad,
Or bow'rs of our Mosella, clad
With roses of a thousand dyes.

Ah me! these nymphs that kill and smile!
These sweet deceivers that embroil
Our city with a thousand frays!—
They rob, they desolate my breast,
They plunder me of peace and rest,
Like Turks, that, scouring to the west,
Flee with the plunder that they seize.

Yet though our love be strong indeed,
These nymphs, all-perfect, do not need
That love of ours, imperfect quite;
A face that God hath fashion'd fair,
Needs it (to shine beyond compare)
Perfumes, and paints, and deckings rare
Of art, so quaint and exquisite?

Come, talk to me of wine and glee,
Of song, and dance, and revelry;
Forego all thoughts that gloom forbode—
Nor fret thy wits to comprehend
Thy future haps, thy latter end;
'Tis bootless, as unwise, to send
Thy soul in bodeful search abroad.

Ah! now so keenly do I prove
The torture of delicious love
In my soul's marrow more and more,
That I can image in my thought,
How young-eyed Joseph's beauty smote
Zoleikha so—such frenzy wrought—
That chastity's dear veil she tore.

Oh thou! to me who dearer art
Than the life-blood that feeds my heart,
List to the voice of prudent men
Improve the day of bliss that flies—
So aged folks and sage advise—
And youth, that docile is and wise,
Will not the sage's saw disdain.

Thy tongue, capricious in its phrase,
Slanders me now, now loads with praise;
Heaven pardon thee for speaking ill!
Thou dost abuse Heav'n's gifts divine;—
Do words so bitter, so malign,
Become a ruby lip like thine,
Whence nought but sweetness should distil?

Oh Hafiz! when thy lips indite
Sweet lays, they seem like gems of light,
Pure pearls in row all-gorgeous strung;
Sing, sing them sweet, for on thy lays
Heav'n seems (the more their pomp t'emblaze)
To shed the lustre and the rays
Of her own Pleiads, downward flung.

ODE

FROM THE PERSIAN OF JAMMEE.

Herja ke kunem khaneh, &c.

Oh! in what place soe'er I stay,
By midnight, morning, or by day,
Thou art the inmate of my breast;
I cannot stop, I cannot stray,
But thy sweet image with me aye
Abides, my bosom's dearest guest!

Sleep I at night, I then behold,
Enchas'd in fancy's garish gold,
Thy form, begemming all my dreams;
If lonely in my room I walk,
I see thee sit, I hear thee talk,
And, though awake, my fancy teems.

When in the tavern down I sit
With boon companions loath to quit,
The wine but fires thine image more;
When I with wordly-minded men
Converse of business and its gain,
Thee, thee, mine idol, I adore!

When in th'assembly-room the dance
Joyous beneath the taper's glance,
Careers and flashes to and fro,
I see thy form (seen else by none),
More bright than Venus round the sun,
Circling the taper's glorious glow!

Should I put off my holy weeds,
And down to ocean's pearl-pav'd meads
Dive from the shore with daring leap,
There I, in each rich shell of sea,
A precious pearl, should spy out *thee*,
Enflaming the surrounding deep!

To each delight, far, near, or round,
Things hop'd in Heav'n, in earth things found,
Lost is thy Jammee's heart and mind;
Earth's jewels in thee are compress'd—
And Paradise, however blest,
In thee finds all her blessings join'd!

THE SWEETEST SPOT.

FROM THE PERSIAN OF MESNAVI.

Oh thou, whose foot erratic still,
And restless as thy wayward will,
From shore to steep, from vale to hill,
All round this glorious orb has reel'd,
Oh! say, of all thine eyes hath seen,
Each town of gold, each grove of green,
Which is the sweetest, happiest scene,
The richest town, the fairest field?

Oh lady, lady! that dear place,
Though poor of soil and scant in space,
Where she we love, the girl whose grace
Has with sweet bondage bless'd the breast:
That spot where she in pomp doth bide,
However mean, o'er all beside,
Empires of power and lands of pride,
Is sweetest, richest, fairest, best!

Wherever dwells the maid we prize,
Bright as the moon that walks the skies,
Her presence doth imparadise
The nook where she in light doth move;
Were it a sunless cavern drear,
To her bless'd lover 'twould appear
More rose-bestrew'd, and bright, and clear,
Than Eden, rich with light and love!

Oh thou, my soul's belov'd! with thee
The dragon's dungeon would to me
But as a bower of roses be,
All pav'd and beautified with bliss;
Heart-plund'rer! whom I love too well,
With thee I joyously could dwell
Ev'n in the howling halls of hell,
And from thy lips an Eden kiss!

FROM THE PERSIAN OF SAADEE.

As Nushir-van, of blaz'd renown,
The king of many a shire and town,
Upon his death-bed lay,
His son, whose soul all meek in youth,
Show'd blossoms fair of worth and truth,
He call'd, and from his fluttering mouth
Address'd his dying say:—

"I go, my Hormuz! to th'abode
Of peace; but to thy father's God
I leave thee all secure:
Oh swerve not from the righteous way;
Be thou to helpless ones a stay;
So shall thy throne on justice aye
Be founded strong and sure!

And be not sluggard then, though crown'd;
In chains, like other princes, bound
Of ease and grandeur gay;
Oh when on purple couch supine,
Thou wallowest redolent of wine,
Alas! thy poor ones most do pine,
'Neath petty tyrants' sway.

Who lauds the shepherd that doth sleep,
When out among his harmless sheep
The bloody wolf is gone?
Arise, my son, and with thy might,
Protect the lowly and th'upright,
Since *through them* kings attain their height,
And reign *for them* alone!

My son, the people are the *root*—
The king the *tree*, that up doth shoot
High from it branching fair;
If thriving be the root and sound,
The glories of the tree abound,
Exuberating round and round
Their sun-spread pride in air!"

THE FAIR ONE WHOM I MEAN.

FROM THE GERMAN OF BURGER.

Oh, in what pomp of love serene
Smiles she, the fair one whom I mean!
Tell it, my pious mouth, to earth
Whose wonder-working hand shines forth,
Whereby in pomp of love serene
She smiles, that fair one whom I mean!

Who has illum'd and kindled bright
Like Paradise her eyes' blue light?
Ev'n he whose pow'r o'er sea and land,
Heav'n's blue bright bending arch hath spann'd;
He hath illum'd and kindled bright
Like Paradise her eyes' blue light!

Who with such master-skill hath spread
Sweet o'er her cheek life's white and red?
He who to th'almond's blossom lent
Its beauteous tincture, dew-besprent;
He, with such master-skill, hath spread
Sweet o'er her cheek life's white and red!

Who form'd her purple mouth so fair,
So rich with sweetness living there?
He who with lusciousness so mild,
Fills the red berry, July's child;
He made her purple mouth so fair,
So rich with sweetness living there!

Who made her silken tresses flow
All-waving round her neck of snow?
He whose sweet west-wind o'er the plain,
Rocks the glad stalks of golden grain;
He bade her silken tresses flow
All-waving round her neck of snow!

Who touch'd for heav'nly speech or song
Her voice with rapture all day long?
He who did lend the lark his note,
And philomel his tuneful throat;
He touch'd for heav'nly speech or song
Her voice with rapture all day long!

Who hath so arch'd her beauteous breast,
Where pleasure has his golden rest?
He that the swan's white bosom fair
Curves out with plumage rich and rare;
He hath so arch'd that beauteous breast
Where pleasure has his golden rest!

What artist fram'd, in high design,
Her waist, so delicate, so fine?
He from whose perfect mind beam'd forth
Beauty's each form in heav'n and earth;
That mighty Artist did design
Her waist, so delicate and fine!

Who breath'd into her form a mind
So pure, angelical, and kind?
He that the angels made on high,
These holy children of the sky;
He breath'd into her form a mind
So pure, angelical, and kind!

Oh praise, Great Maker! to thine art,
And thanks warm-bursting from my heart,
That beauty's type enchants me so,
Crown'd with each grace thy world can show;
Oh praise, Great Maker! to thine art,
And thanks warm-bursting from my heart?

But ah! for whom on earth below
Smiles she, attired in beauty so?
Oh God! might I have ne'er been born,
Ne'er seen thy blissful light of morn,
If not *for me* in beauty so,
Smiles she, that fair one whom I know!

THE HUGE SHIP OF HIERO.

FROM THE GREEK OF ARCHIMELUS.

Somewhat amplified by the Translator.

Who plann'd, who rear'd, so vast of amplitude,
This mountain-ship, this labyrinth of wood?
Who founded, fortified, and laid in strength,
Her keel, enormous in its oaken length?
Who launch'd her down? who drew her into sea
With ropes and rollers of immensity?
Who meted out with ochre and with line,
Her convex frame, plank'd round with fir and pine?
What axes, lighting with tremendous stroke,
Chipp'd her huge timbers and her knees of oak?
Like wood-crown'd Etna tow'ring to the clouds
She sits, encumb'ring with her weight the floods;
Or like some island of the Cyclades,
Round which, displac'd, roll surlily the seas.
Have not the giants fram'd her for their use,
Their pleasure yacht for an Atlantic cruise,
To scud around the world in paddling play
With the blythe bright sun on a summer's day,
Then cross at night, oblique from pole to pole,
Peep o'er the ices, and survey the whole?
Her yards, for want of room, into the clouds
Thrust their heav'n-spanning arms, as by she scuds;
Upon her main-top pitch'd, a giant might
Stretch out his hand toward the Zenith's height,
And pluck the Pleiads from their place of light.
Such cables bind her anchors as of yore
Were bound by Xerxes to the Abydian shore,
When by his bridge of boats and cables vast
Two continents with knots he coupl'd fast;
Her stern, high rear'd with elevation bold,
In gorgeous letters over-fret with gold,
Proclaims his name whose heart the ship design'd,
Whose treasures answer'd his high soaring mind—
Great Hiero, who rules with mild command
Sicilia's happy hearts and happy land;
Who built her for this noble use—that he
Might waft his country's harvests over sea;
And from her huge life-giving hold, might bless
Lands with the gifts of Ceres honour'd less—
Greece, and his isles, when famine sore doth press.
Oh speed the vessel, Neptune! be thy care
Her on thy vault of waters safe to bear;
And not unworthy prove thyself to be
Of the great gallant gift conferr'd on thee,
This ship-o'ertowering ship, this palace of the sea!

THE MINSTREL.

FROM THE GERMAN OF GOETHE.

"What minstrel voice is this that rings
So blythely by my castle wall?
Command the joyous wight that sings
To appear within and bless my hall."
The king commands—the page forth flies;
The page returns; the monarch cries—
"Admit, admit the old man to me,
That makes my court resound with glee!"

"Accept, oh sire, a bard's salute!
Accept it, lords and lovely dames!
What heav'n is here!—what glances shoot!
These stars! who may tell all their names?
Be shut, mine eyes! nor dare to gaze
On palace-pomp, and beauty's blaze;
Here is not place nor time, I ween,
Long to luxuriate with my eyne!"

He closed his eyelids, and begun
His harp-wed roundel, clear and strong;
The sturdy-hearted knights were won—
The ladies captivate with song;
The monarch, grateful for the joy,
Commands his page, the laughing boy,
To bring a golden chain, that he
Might pay the poet for his glee.

"Sire, give me not the golden chain;
The golden chain give to your knights,
That prop and decorate your reign
With gallantry, and feats, and fights;
Or to your chanc'lor, that maintains
The state's expense with sweat and pains;
Add, to his load of things of state,
The golden chain's less cumbrous weight!

I sing as bird in spring-time sings,
Rock'd in his house of tufted tree;
The song that from glad heart up-rings,
Itself is rich repaying fee:
Yet, should I dare t'entreat at all,
'Twould be a guerdon slight and small—
But one draught of thy best of wine,
From golden cup so pure and fine!"

He got the cup—he drain'd its bliss;
"Oh draught, of heav'nly pow'r possest!
Oh blessed be the house, where this
Is of its blissful gifts the least!
Walk ye in joy up life's gay road,
So think of me, and thank your God,
With heart as throbbing warm as mine
Thanks you for your good cup of wine!"

THE VIOLET.

FROM THE GERMAN OF GOETHE.

A violet on the meadow stood,
And droop'd in dewy solitude,
Abash'd its gentle head:
There came, with bounding pace along,
A shepherd-maiden fair and young,
And hither-thither tript and sung,
Rejoicing o'er the mead.

Ah! (thinks the violet) were I now
But for a little while, I trow,
Fair nature's fairest bloom!
That she, my love that gambols near,
Might nip me idly dangling here,
And plant me on her bosom dear,
T'expire in my perfume!

But ah! but ah! that maid tript by,
Nor did the bashful violet spy;
She trod poor violet!
It died, yet sung, as it did die,
I die, but die rejoicingly
That, by her dear foot trodden, I
So sweet a death have met!

KNIGHT TOGGENBURG.

FROM THE GERMAN OF SCHILLER.

"I love thee, gentle knight! but 'tis
Such love as sisters bear;
Oh ask my heart no more than this—
That heart no more may spare!
In peace I see thy form appear,
In peace I see thee go;
But check that sigh, and stop that tear,
Their cause I may not know!"

In grief he heard her soft rebuke;
Mute from her arms he sprung;
Gave one farewell, one last fond look,
Then on his steed him swung.
He to his vassals orders gave,
Through all his Switzer-band,
To hie them to the Holy Grave,
Christ's banner in their hand.

Deeds were done there of force and fame
By ev'ry hero's arm;
Then tufted helms did wave and flame,
Amid Mohammed's swarm.
And Toggenburg's loud-rumour'd name
Fill'd Pagans with alarm;
Yet, in his heart, love's gloomy flame
Burn'd on with hidden harm.

One year he hath endur'd the grief—
Nor longer can it bear;
Abandon'd to unrest, the chief
Leaves Jewry and the war.
He sees a ship on Joppa's strand,
Just bound for Europe's seas—
Embarks for home, and that lov'd land,
Rich with *her* breath's sweet breeze.

And at *her* castle's silent gate
The pilgrim knocks in fear;
'Twas open'd—and a voice like fate
Came dreadful on his ear;—
"She whom you seek is now Heav'n's bride,
In cloister's still abode;
'Twas yesterday the bond was tied
That spous'd her to her God!"

Ah! now he leaves, full sad and sore,
His halls built fair and high;
His arms, his true steed, never more
Rejoice that warrior's eye.
From Toggenburg, his sire's domain,
He to the vale comes down,
Enwrapt and hid, from fellows' ken,
By hairy hood and gown.

And there a little hut he rears,
Near to the linden-grove,
Where holy, in the midst appears,
The cloister of his love:
All day, from morning's earliest beam,
Till evening chill and late,
Still fondling hope's delirious dream,
There, there alone he sate.

And on the cloister's casement hung
All day untir'd his look,
Until the lattice clank'd and rung
Beneath her finger's stroke;
Till the dear damsel, angel-mild,
Th'espoused to her God,
Down on the valley look'd and smil'd,
And bless'd him with a nod.

And then in peace he, in his bower,
Lay down and slumber'd fain;
And rose rejoic'd at morning hour,
To feast his eyes again.
And so for many a day he sate,
And many a year and long,
Patient, withouten plaint, to wait
Until her lattice rung;

Till the dear damsel, angel-mild,
Th'espoused to her God,
Look'd on his little hut, and smil'd,
And bless'd him with a nod.
And so, one morn, he in the vale,
A corpse sate livid there,
And tow'rd the lattice, still his pale
Eye turn'd its lifeless glare!

LEONORE.

If the following translation of Burger's most celebrated poem has any merit, it must consist principally in its compression and brevity. The author's peculiar stanza, with the same collocation of rhymes, is here used by the translator; the lines, as to number of syllables, having the same metrical length, saving that the 2d, 4th, 7th, and 8th lines, which in the original terminate in double, here end in single rhymes. Each stanza, therefore, of this translation is less, by *four syllables*, than each of the original.

Young Leonore with light of morn
Up-rose from dreams of dread;
"My William! wilt thou ne'er return?
Art thou untrue or dead?"
He had, with royal Fred'rick's might,
March'd off for Prague to share the fight;
Nor tidings to his home
Had of his safety come.

Emp'ror and Empress, of that feud
Now weary, did surcease
Their bitterness of ireful mood,
And to the land gave peace;
And either host, with shouts that rang,
With cymbal's chime and clank and clang,
Crown'd with gay branches green,
Are homeward marching seen.

And far and near and round about,
On high-road, path, and street,
Come young and old all swarming out,
That homeward host to meet:
"Thanks, thanks to God!" wife, children cried;
"Welcome," cried many a blythesome bride.
But ah! for Leonore
Were kiss and bliss no more!

She question'd all the line along
Of him she lov'd so dear,
But none of all that soldier-throng
Gave to her word of cheer;
And when the troops had all pass'd by,
Her locks she tore with scream and cry,
And threw herself on ground
In plight of woe profound.

"Mercy, oh God!" her mother mild
Ran crying with alarms,
"What aileth thee, my dearest child?"
And caught her in her arms.
"Oh mother! what is done is done;
Now, farewell all beneath the sun!
With God no pity lies—
Woe, woe, to me!" she cries.

"Help, God! look on us from above!
Child! pray thy soul to peace;
What God hath done is done in love;
God is a God of grace!"
"Oh mother, mother! vain that thought—
God not to me in love hath wrought;
What boots thine idle prayer?
God hath of me no care!"

"Help, God! who best the father knows
Knows best his filial love;
To thy sad soul a sweet repose
God's sacrament shall prove."
"Oh mother, mother! to my woe
No sacrament can rest bestow—
That the dead man should live,
What sacrament can give?"

"How if that false false man, my child,
In Hung'ry's distant land,
(His faith renounc'd) hath thee beguil'd
For some new marriage-band?
Let his heart whirl about as wind,
No gain, no true-love shall he find;
When his soul seeks the pit
His sin shall punish it."

"Oh mother! thus to fret is vain—
My loss must needs be borne;
Death, death is now mine only gain;
Would I had ne'er been born!
Be quench'd, be quench'd for aye, my light!
Perish my soul in gloom and night!
God's mercies cease to flow—
Woe to me, poor one, woe!"

"Help, God! nor into judgment go
With this thy poor weak child:
What her tongue saith she doth not know;
Forgive her wand'rings wild!
Oh child! thine earthly pain forget—
Heav'n's bliss and God before thee set;
So shall thy soul be join'd
To bridegroom true and kind."

"Oh mother! what is heavenly bliss?
Oh mother! what is hell?
With him, with him is heavenly bliss!—
Without my William, hell:
Be quench'd, be quench'd for aye, my light!
Perish my soul in gloom and night!
Without him, nor on earth
Nor heav'n, for me is mirth!"

Thus in her bosom and her brain,
Wild, wild despair did rage,
And with God's providence in vain
A rash war did she wage;
She wrung her hands, she smote her breast,
'Till the sun vanish'd in the west,
And up heav'n's golden arch
The golden stars 'gan march.

And hark! without, a trampling sound,
As if of hoof of steed;
And, down with clatter on the ground,
A rider bounds with speed;
And hark! and hark! the door's loose ring
'Gins tingle with a kling-kling-kling;
Then through the valve's close frame
Audible words there came:—

"Holloa! holloa! Up!—open, dear!
Dost wake, my girl, or sleep?
Continues yet thy love sincere?
Dost thou or laugh or weep?"
"Ha! William there?—so late at night?
Wept, watch'd, have I, a weary wight;
Ah, suffer'd direful woe!
Whence com'st thou riding so?"

"At midnight saddle we our steeds—
I from Bohemia ride;
Late, late I donn'd my bridal weeds,
To take thee hence, my bride."
"So quick!—ah William! first come in;
Hark to the wind's leaf-rustling din!
Ah, come! within my arms
Be warm'd from night's chill harms!"

"Let the wind blow, dear; let it stir
The leaves with rustling din;
My horse paws proud—loud clangs the spur—
I dare not house within:
Come, tuck thee up! spring, spring with speed
Behind me on my coal-black steed!
A hundred miles, dear bride,
We home to bed must ride!"

"This night a hundred miles wilt thou
Me home to bride-bed bring?
Hark! how the clock still hums—e'en now
Eleven hath ceas'd to ring!"
"Look here, look here! The moon shines bright!
We and the dead ride quick by night!
Ere twelve's long hour shall ring
Thee home to bed I bring!"

"Where is thy chamber, then?—oh where
The bed of our repose?"
"Far hence—'tis narrow, silent, drear,
Six boards its frame compose!"
"Room in't for me?" "For me and thee;
Up! spring thou, swing thou close to me!
The marriage-guests are met;
Doors open—meats all set!"

The maid tuck'd up, and up she sprung
High on the horse in haste,
And fast her lily-hands she flung
Around the rider's waist;
And hurry, hurry!—hop, hop, hop!
They gallop'd off sans stay or stop;
That horse and horseman blew,
And sparks and splinters flew!

On right hand and on left how fleet
Before their eyen did scud
Hedges and heaths!—how 'neath their feet
The bridges thunder'd loud!
"Fears yet my love? The moon shines bright!
Hurrah! the dead ride fast at night!
For dead folk art a-dread?"
"Ah no!—yet leave the dead!"

What din this on the highway's verge?
Why flit the rav'ns o'erhead?
Hark! clink of bell!—Hark! dead man's dirge!—
"*Let us entomb the dead.*"
And aye the fun'ral-folk drew near,
Coffin, and crape, and pall, and bier;
The song was like the shriek
Of frogs, in pools that squeak.

"When twelve's long hour hath struck, with song
And howl, then tomb thy dead;
Now, my young wife I bear along
With me to bridal-bed!
Come, sexton, with thy chaunter-crowd,
Shriek, shriek our bridal hymn aloud!
Come priest, and speak the blessing,
Ere bed-ward we be pressing!"

The song was at his bidding hush'd—
Evanish'd bier and pall;
And at his horse's heels they rush'd—
Priest, sexton, choir, and all;
And onward scudding without stop,
They flurried, hurried—hop, hop, hop!
That horse and horseman blew,
And sparks and splinters flew!

How flew on right hand, how on left
Huge forests with their hills!
How flew on left, and right and left,
Towers, turrets, rivers, rills!
"Fears yet my love? The moon shines bright!
Hurrah! the dead ride fleet by night!
For dead folk art a-dread?"
"Ah! let them rest, the dead!"

Look, look beside the gallows-tree,
All round the murd'rous wheel,
An airy people, dire to see,
Doth in the moonshine reel!
"Ha! gloomy group! come hither, come,
And follow me with whine and hum!
Trip ye our bridal dance
As bed-ward we advance!"

The gloomy group, with wings that brush,
Come flying fast behind,
As rustles through the hazel-bush
Amid dry leaves the wind;
And onward, onward!—hop, hop, hop!
Flick'ring they flew, sans stay or stop!
That horse and horseman blew,
And sparks and splinters flew!

How flew what seemed the moon on high
Down to th'horizon far!
How scudded heav'n's vast zodiac by,
With planet and with star!
"Fears yet my love? The moon shines bright!
Hurrah! the dead ride fleet at night!
For dead folk art a-dread?"
"Woe's me! let rest the dead!"

"Hey! onward, horse! the cock now crows—
Our sand's nigh run, my steed;
On! on! the morning breeze now blows;
I smell it!—onward! speed!
Finish'd—ha!—finish'd now our race!
The bride-bed opes its small chill space!
Dead folk, how fast they trot!
We are upon the spot!"

They stood beside a trellis-gate
Of iron, drear to view;
'Twas touch'd—with clank and clang, the grate,
Bar, bolt and lock, up-flew!
The trellis'd valves rebound with force,
And over graves was now their course;
Thick in the moonshine shone
Tombs dark of carved stone!

Look, look! e'en in a moment's space,
(God's grace, how terrible!)
Like tinder, dropping piece by piece,
The rider's doublet fell!
His head, so tufted late and fair,
Grinn'd a grim skull, sans skin and hair—
A skeleton the rest,
With scythe and death's gear drest!

High pranc'd the steed with head elate—
Fire flash'd as he did neigh;
When lo! beneath her as she sate
He vanish'd quite away!
Loud howlings bellow'd down from air;
From graves low whimp'rings of despair
The heart of Leonore
'Tween death and life beat sore.

Now, round and round, by moon's pale glance
Of ghosts the sheeted throng
Gambol'd their grim and hideous dance,
And shrick'd their shrilly song!
"Be patient! albeit hearts be riv'n,
Yet quarrel not with God in heav'n;
Now thou'rt from flesh disjoin'd—
God to thy soul be kind!"

END OF TENNANT'S POEMS.

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